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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[HUSH MONEY.]

LADY ROSLYN'S MYSTERY.

CHAPTER III.

Leave wringing of your hands: peace; sit you down.
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff. *Hamlet.*

THE man who had so strangely introduced himself into the bridal chamber of the young Countess of Roslyn, and whom she was now regarding with mingled horror and affright, was somewhat remarkable in appearance.

He was not tall for a man, being scarcely taller than the bride herself, and he was rather slight in figure; but his frame had a springiness that pertains to the best-tempered steel; and there was a quiet consciousness of physical strength and power in his quick, alert movements, the keen glances of his eye, and the careless smile on his mouth.

He was rather handsome, but had a girlish look, scarcely redeemed by the soft, thin, blonde moustache that half shaded his upper lip. His blue eyes, however, were not at all feminine, but his white hands, profusely decorated with gems of the first water, might have belonged to a lady.

A moment's glance at him discovered him to be a dandy. His garments, of the most fashionable description and of the finest materials, looked as if he had been made for them, instead of the contrary; his linen was delicate enough for a princess, and diamond studs glittered in his shirt front, jewels sparkled from the delicate mauve tie that encircled his throat, and flashed from his wristbands.

A faint perfume emanated from his smooth well-kept hair, and from the embroidered handkerchief that peeped from his pocket.

Altogether, he looked like one of those dainty darlings of society whose chief pattern is Beau Brummel.

But the woman cowering before him, knew him to be something more than the perfumed exquisite.

She knew well that his jewelled hands had a grip in them like a vice; that he could handle easily many

a larger man; that, in fact, under his delicate and girlish exterior he possessed the strength of a Hercules. She knew him to be unequalled, or unsurpassed, in the use of the pistol, the sword, or the dagger, and that, to perfect him in "the manly art of self-defence," not a single accomplishment had been omitted.

She knew him to be like the deadly tiger, agile, alert, and armed at every point.

She knew that his smile was like the blooming of flowers upon the edge of a fearful precipice.

She knew that, despite his outward appearance, he was at heart as fierce and revengeful as a hideous beast of prey, and that many of the most terrible and evil passions that disgrace humanity held wild riot within his soul.

And all this was hidden under a fair and elegant seeming.

No wonder that the bride, encountering him in her private rooms, should regard him with fear and loathing; no wonder that she had nearly fainted at beholding him, at the moment she had been about to enter for the first time her husband's house.

"The Count Lechelle!" she had called him upon discovering him in her boudoir, and under that name many years before he had had a brief experience of fashionable society. He had in some informal way introduced himself to an easy-going young English lord at Paris, declaring himself one of the *ancien noblesse*, and this young nobleman being fascinated by his manners and charmed by his address, had induced him to accompany him to England, where he had introduced him to his own family and to good society in general.

For a time Count Lechelle had been vastly popular.

His peculiar ties had been copied by ambitious youths; his favourite perfumes were in request; his horses were the objects of considerable envy and heart-burning; and, to crown all, the fascinating Frenchman found favour in the eyes of lovely belles and their mammas, who would gladly have tempted him into matrimony.

The old adage, however, of "going up like a rocket

and coming down like a stick," was fully exemplified in this case.

First, came whispers that the charming count was no Frenchman, but an Englishman born and bred—no nobleman, but an adventurer who had cleverly imposed upon an unsuspicious and credulous young nobleman. But as his diamonds were unmistakably real, and his horses pure-blooded, two parties were immediately formed, one of whom turned the cold shoulder upon the late favourite, and the other of whom grew more in love with him than ever.

In the midst of the contention, the count had disappeared—vanished as completely as though the earth had opened and swallowed him up.

Various speculations were indulged in with regard to his disappearance, but not a single conjecture even approached the truth.

The period between his popularity in the social world and the present moment had been a blank to every one but himself.

And now he had as strangely reappeared.

"I—I thought you were dead," faltered the young countess, in a hollow tone, as she could sufficiently command her voice.

"Did you, indeed?" returned her strange visitor, mockingly.

His tone seemed to inspire her with courage.

Her dark-gray eyes glowed, a sudden colour sprang to her lips and cheeks, and she no longer cowered before him.

"Yes," she said, "I thought you were dead, or that you would never darken my path again. But I do not fear you. I am not unprotected."

"You have a loving bridegroom to appeal to," he remarked, carelessly.

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing—only that I happened to be under the drawing-room window on the balcony this evening. My position was such that I unavoidably overheard the very affectionate conversation that passed between the earl and yourself."

Lady Roslyn drew herself up haughtily, and pointed to the window.

"Go!" she said, quietly. "Do you not know that

I have but to pull that bell to have you arrested as a burglar? Do you not know that I have but to call, and my husband will come to me?"

"I do know it," returned the intruder, flinging himself into the easy-chair from which he had arisen at her entrance, and tossing the key of the bed-chamber upon the table. "You are free to pass out if you like, my dear countess. Or shall I ring for you?" and he made a pretence of arising. "Allow me to summon your household!"

"Oh, no, no!" broke from the bride's pale lips, her calmness and haughtiness alike gone.

"Why, I thought you braved me!" he said, in affected surprise.

The young countess shuddered.

If she had been radiantly lovely before, she was not less so now, with her splendid wealth of glittering hair falling down her back, with a look of horror brooding in her eyes, and with an expression of fear mingled with abhorrence upon her face.

"By Jove! You are a splendid creature, Adine!" declared the count, admiringly. "You are a most magnificent woman. You ought to have been a queen at the least. The earl must be a perfect boor to look unmoved upon so much beauty!"

The countess shrank back, as if a rude hand had touched a painful wound, and she said:

"I am entirely satisfied with the relations existing between my husband and myself—"

"I don't doubt it. You didn't marry him for love, as you said. I know all about you, Adine. I should have liked to have seen you at the altar, but the truth was I was otherwise engaged. And I thought it would do just as well if I were at hand to welcome you to your future home. If I were only a friend of the earl's now, I could open his eyes a little. I should tell him that the Lady Adine Sayton accepted him in order to please Harold Bevan into a proposal, but that she failed in her object. I should tell him that she loves Bevan more than any other being, and that on her bridal night she wept because she was not Bevan's wife. I heard you a little while ago, Lady Adine, when you were telling your griefs to the moon, and I must say your face was not very appropriate to a bride. But this is all nonsense, and a mere digression. I could tell Lord Roslyn things that would cause the hair to stand up from his head; I could tell him things that would make him loathe and curse you—"

"You—you allude to the secret?" whispered the young bride.

"I do!"

Lady Roslyn shivered painfully, and her face grew ghastly in its pallor.

"I may as well die at once!" she exclaimed, despairingly.

"Die! By no means! I couldn't spare you," said the dandy, admiring the sparkle and glow of his rings in the lamp-light, and apparently unmindful of the terrible anguish of the lovely woman opposite him.

"Why have you come here, Alaric? To betray me to him?"

"Not unless you compel me to do so. I am well aware that he would pay me any amount to hush the words I could speak, and that he would then turn you from his house. But as such a catastrophe would do me no good, I do not care to produce it—unless I am compelled. I think I can get as much money in an easier way. In short, my dear Lady Adine, I am ready to be silenced!"

The young countess regarded him with a bewildered look.

"I don't know how to silence you!" she said, simply. "You are insensible to appeals. Your heart is as hard as a mill-stone!"

"I am not insensible to the proper kind of appeal," returned Count Lechelle, waving his hand so that his cluster of diamonds might send forth a perfect shower of prismatic hues. "Like all great men, my dear countess, I have my weak points."

"I know that well enough!" she said, bitterly. "Not at all disconcerted by her response, the *soldi* count continued:

"I suppose no man, however great, is quite invulnerable. I will own frankly that I am not. The vulnerable point of Achilles was in his heel—mine is in my pocket. Any persuasions which you may apply to my purse will receive consideration. Golden persuaders have, I am free to confess, a great charm for me!"

"I understand you. How much money do you want? How much money will relieve me of your presence for ever?"

The dandy appeared to make a computation upon the tips of his white fingers, but he speedily relinquished the task, and replied:

"Such an arrangement would be extremely distasteful to me, Lady Adine. I have no present intention of quitting England, and, of course, I could not undertake to say that we should no longer meet again."

"What arrangement then do you wish to make?" Count Lechelle appeared to enjoy the mental agony of the lovely woman, whom some strange fate had placed in his power, and he was silent that she might further humble herself to plead to him.

"Speak quickly, Alaric," she said, wildly and despairingly, fancying that she heard a footstep in her dressing-room. "Oh, heavens! if you should be discovered here!"

She listened intently, but did not hear the sound again.

"I should be ruined, if you were detected here!" she exclaimed. "Oh, Alaric, for heaven's sake, speak quickly!"

Even the heartless dandy oppressing her, was startled out of his pretended listlessness by her anguish, and answered:

"Don't be alarmed, Adine. No one will seek you here. You will be presumed to be at your devotions."

"Tell me what you want?"

As the bride appeared to recover her courage, he became himself again. He glanced at the tiny alabaster clock upon the white marble shelf, and, assuring himself that he had plenty of time, said, leisurely:

"My dear Lady Adine, a few words will tell you all I have to say. I have no desire to trouble you by demanding now a larger sum than you can command. I could not be persuaded to take a certain sum, and see you no more for ever, for I should assuredly break any such agreement. Now, I have a pleasant little plan to propose!"

"Speak on!" said the bride, nervously.

"You are a very queen, Adine—a lovely, glorious queen! Now, I will be your subject, your pensioner. All queens have pensioners, you know. I shall come to you when I am in want of funds—it may not be often, although I am very extravagant, I know—and you shall always fill my purse!"

"This is downright robbery!"

"That is a harsh name for it—but perhaps you're right!" responded the dandy, carelessly. "But you need not accede to my terms, Adine. Turn me away—denounce me—do just as you please!"

But, alas! the young Countess of Roslyn dared not do that.

The secret to which she had alluded fettered her hands like clamps of iron, and weighed upon her like heavy chains.

She dared not offend this careless, smiling, remorseless man!

"You know that I am bound hand and foot!" she said, wildly. "Oh, Alaric, is there no pity in your soul? Will you not take a sum which shall relieve me of your presence for ever? You know that the idea that you may come to me at any time will be like a death's head at a feast. You know that my days will be anxious and my nights sleepless!"

He smiled, grimly.

"That is to be a part of my price," he said, "a part I neglected to mention. I want a friend in a high place, Adine, a friend who will have an interest in befriending me. That friend must be yourself. If you wish our interview to be brief, accede at once. I assure you that no amount of pleading or protestation will alter my resolution!"

He spoke in a tone the young bride knew well—and she pleaded no more for mercy.

"Since I can do no better," she declared, "I must yield!"

"That is right. You remember me, I see. All these years have not obliterated me from your mind, at any rate. It is settled then, my queen, that I am to be your pensioner!"

Lady Roslyn murmured assent.

"The secret then is the same as if buried!"

The young countess could not trust her voice to speak, but a degree of satisfaction was visible through her gloom.

"I will give you an opportunity of exercising your royal generosity at the present moment," said Count Lechelle, drawing from his pocket a richly-embroidered purse and laying it upon the table. "A hundred pounds as an instalment of my liberal pension would not be refused!"

"I—I have not a hundred pounds with me," said the bride.

"The earl, perhaps—"

Lady Roslyn's eyes flashed indignantly.

"You know well," she said, "that I dare not apply to him at this hour of the night for money. You know that it would bring about the very catastrophe I most desire to avoid!"

"Pardon my thoughtlessness. But I was surprised at your acknowledgement that you had not the sum required. I would advise you to keep yourself better supplied in future, in view of my probable visits. You are so rich, Adine, that all I shall require will be but a mere bagatelle to your handsome income. A cheque might make up the deficiency—yet, stay,"

he added, as a sudden thought seemed to occur to him. "You have any quantity of jewels—the hair-locks of the Saytons and the family diamonds of the Roslyns, besides a fortune in bridal presents. Some trifle—I have a weakness for gems," and he glanced complacently at his hands, "will make up the deficiency in money!"

"But I dare not go to my dressing-room. My husband may be there."

"You can dismiss him then, brave him, or evade him. Women know so many little arts, and are so ingenious—"

The youthful countess put forth her hand, making a gesture commanding silence, and then arose, struggling to compose her features.

The count watched the high-spirited woman as if she were a curious study.

She did not long allow him the opportunity, for, suddenly flinging back her shimmering tresses, she assumed a calmness she did not feel, and unlocked the door communicating with her bed-chamber.

She then passed in, closing the door behind her.

He lounged in the chair, awaiting her return, and surveying with a critical air the plenishing of the boudoir.

While he was thus engaged, the bride passed into her dressing-room, and started back as she observed that the door communicating with her husband's room was ajar.

What if he had overheard her interview with Lechelle!

A moment's reflection convinced her that he could not have done so, but she trembled like a leaf as she went to her writing-case and took out her velvet purse. She trembled still more as she moved towards her large, square jewel-box, and caught up, with a half-guilty look, from the topmost tray, a diamond bracelet—a gift from the earl, and worth much more than the entire sum demanded by her enemy.

But in her fear of detection by the earl, she gave no thought to the value of the ornament, nor remembered that it had been clasped upon her arm by Lord Roslyn himself after their betrothal!

She had scarcely possessed herself of it, when she heard a movement in the earl's apartment, and, with a look of alarm, she fled from the room, hastening back to her boudoir.

Arrived there, she locked the door behind her, and sank, pallid and breathless, upon a chair.

Count Lechelle regarded her excitement with singular carelessness, as if perfectly assured of his own safety, whatever might happen to her.

As soon as she had partially recovered from her fears, the young countess handed him her purse, requesting him to examine its contents.

He did so, running the gold and bank notes through his fingers, as though he entertained a supreme contempt for them, remarking:

"Seventy pounds, and some small change—"

The bride interrupted him by tossing him the bracelet.

At sight of its sparkling gems, the dandy's listless look vanished, an eager expression gleamed from his eyes, and his countenance beamed with satisfaction.

He knew the value of the costly bauble.

"That is very pretty!" he said, affecting indifference. "The star is really unique, the gems being so well matched. The first payment on my pension is very liberal and quite satisfactory, my generous queen. You will find me as still as death, if you keep up this style of treatment."

He thrust the ornament into his pocket, and then arose, adding:

"I am sorry to have detained you so long. I will go now. You need not look for my return at any stated period, for I shall come whenever I have need of money, or desire to refresh my memory by a sight of your face!"

He caught her reluctant hand to his lips, giving it a gentle pressure, and then, with a last assurance of his return at some entirely unexpected moment, he stepped out upon the balcony.

The shivering bride drew near to watch his departure.

She saw him catch hold of a branch of a tree bending close to the window, and swing himself lightly clear of the dwelling. The next moment he was descending the tree with the agility of a cat.

When he had reached the ground, he raised his hat gracefully, waved his hand, and disappeared under the shadow of the trees.

"Thank heaven! I am freed from his presence!" murmured Lady Roslyn, with clasped hands.

"But he will come again! What a life is before me! I am completely at his mercy, and must submit to his demands for money so long as he shall choose to make them. Oh, if he were only dead! Then and then alone would I be perfectly safe. So long as

Alaric Lechelle lives, so long will the awful secret be in danger of betrayal!"

CHAPTER IV.

Her form was fresher than the morning rose,
When the dew wets its leaves; unstained, and pure,
As is the lily, or the mountain snow. *Thomson.*

Then her face
So lovely, yet so arch, so full of mirth.
The overflowings of an innocent heart.

Rogers.

At a distance of about fifty miles from Roslyn Manor was situated a dwelling, to which we now desire to call the attention of the reader.

It was no stately home like the ancestral seat of the lords of Roslyn, but it possessed an air of comfort and respectability, and, on the morning subsequent to the events detailed in the preceding chapter, it had an air of elegance, being half-embowered in blossoming June roses, and surrounded by a profusion of fragrant flowers and well-trimmed shrubbery.

The house was large, and built of red brick, with few efforts at ornament. The windows were of good size and arched at the top. There was an ample porch protecting the front entrance, and a rustic lattice, covered with vines, shaded a side door. One side of the dwelling was nearly hidden by ivy leaves, which had been parted in places, to permit the use of the windows they would have obscured.

This house was placed at a little distance from the road, in the midst of an old-fashioned garden, where bloomed the flowers we have mentioned, together with all the favourites of country gardens of fifty years ago. There were sweet-williams and love-lies-bleeding, ragged robins, and bachelor's button, mourning brides, and the rest of the long list with quaint nomenclature, that were the delight of our ancestors.

Beside the ample garden, there was a paddock and a kitchen garden, comprising all the land belonging to the place.

The house, with its few accompanying acres, was called Anerly Lodge.

It was situated upon the brow of a hill, overlooking the busy little village of Horleigh, which was less than a mile distant.

Anerly Lodge had, fifty years before, grown into excellent repute among the neighbouring gentry, as the home of "Mrs. Polack's school for young ladies," and in the succeeding years its reputation had increased in a quiet way, until it had reached even so far as the great metropolis. There had been no need of advertisements to keep the vacancies supplied. Young girls who had been educated there, went out to other homes, and sent their daughters to be trained by the same hands that had moulded their own characters. Besides, the accomplishments of its pupils were in themselves sufficient advertisement, and the mistress of the school had never any cause to sigh over scanty receipts, or unoccupied seats at her table.

Five-and-twenty years of successful teaching had been enough for the acquirement of a handsome competence, and, at the age of sixty-three, five years previous to the opening date of our story, Mrs. Polack had sent home her pupils, dismissed her assistant teachers, and settled down to the well-earned enjoyment of the ease and comforts of existence.

Anerly Lodge had belonged to her husband, a degenerate scion of an excellent family, and was the remnant of a considerable estate, which had nearly all been wasted in riotous living. This house had been settled upon Mrs. Polack at her marriage, and but for that fortunate provision her life must have been beset with terrible difficulties.

She had been no longer young at her marriage. Her father, a hard-working clergyman, had needed her services in his household for the first thirty years of her life, and she had come to Anerly Lodge longing for a life of ease, which was not to be hers.

For a few years, her husband had treated her with consideration, but, falling into worse habits than ever, he had deserted her soon after the birth of her son, their only child, leaving her to provide for herself.

In this juncture, she had shown herself a woman of energy.

Determining to educate her worse than fatherless boy for some gentlemanly profession, she had thrown open her house as a school for young ladies, meeting with the success we have indicated.

Perhaps the greatest event of all these years of unremitting labour, had been the return of her husband, who had come back to crave her pardon for his ill-behaviour to her, and to die, repentant and forgiven, in her arms.

Since then, Mrs. Polack's life had glided along, with some anxieties, but in a generally peaceful current.

On the morning we have mentioned, she was standing by the window of her morning-room, looking out upon her garden with a strangely thoughtful expression.

She was a tall, large woman, with a commanding air, suitable to one who had been so long an empress in her own domain. She had a plain, strongly-marked face, the heavy brows shading a pair of keen eyes, a wide mouth, the lips of which were usually compressed, and iron-gray hair, but half-concealed by her lace caps. Her countenance wore usually an expression of severity.

Her thoughts could scarcely have been pleasant, for she soon turned impatiently from the open window, and seated herself, busying her hands with some delicate fancywork in gay-coloured wools.

She was thus engaged when her solitude was broken by the entrance of a young girl, who danced into the room, with her arms filled with flowers.

"Alix! Alix!" said Mrs. Polack, with an attempt at reproach, counteracted by the sudden pleasant smile that broke over her stern face. "When will you leave off such childish ways?"

"When I get to be an old lady, aunty dear," was the gay response, as the young girl drew a cushion to Mrs. Polack's feet and seated herself upon it, looking up into the lady's face. "Shall I try to be grave now, aunty?"

She drew down the corners of her mouth and assumed a look of seriousness, at sight of which Mrs. Polack smiled again, and patted the young head against her knee, with a tender, caressing movement.

"I want you to be just as you are, Alix, darling," she said. "I would not have you grave beyond your years. I like to hear your laughter through the rooms. You are my greatest comfort, love!"

"Except Rellen, aunty!"

"Except my son Rellen," said the old lady, her tones lingering upon the name. "But Rellen thinks there is no one in the world who can compare with our Alix!"

The young girl blushed, but so faintly that it might have been but the reflection of the poppies, which she was busily weaving into a wreath, and a shy look crept into her eyes.

Rellen Polack, whose opinion had been quoted by his mother, had good reason for his admiration for Alix, and he was not alone in it.

For Alix Erle was gifted with a strange and wonderful beauty.

She was not tall, and her form was so ethereal as to be deemed fairylike. She was the very incarnation of grace. Her swift, light movements were the poetry of motion. Her hands and feet were exquisitely well-shaped, and very small, though not out of proportion to her figure.

But her face was her crowning loveliness.

It had not the pure, cold splendour of the Lady of Roslyn, that queenly beauty with its possibilities of passion under a glittering exterior, but it was none the less a true and rare beauty.

Alix Erle's face was like a glorious tropical night, rather than the magnificent day.

Her complexion was clear and dark, a "pale darkness," as some one has well described it. The bright scarlet fluttered in and out of her cheeks, but settled permanently in her lovely lips. Her eyes were almost black, large and velvety in their softness, shaded by long black lashes that rested themselves against her cheeks. They were haunting eyes, brimming over with a joyous spirit, yet having in them depths of sadness, rather to be felt than seen by the observer.

Her hair was like night itself, purple in its blackness, and glossy as a mirror. It fell in short, loose, perfumed curls about her face, forming a fitting frame for her beauty.

Her pretty pink lawn morning-dress, with its frills of lace about the round, slender throat, and at the small wrists, indicated a delicate and refined taste, and a love for the beautiful in every form.

"I hope Rellen will come here to-day, aunty," said the young maiden, continuing to busy herself with her flowers. "He ought to remember that to-day is my birth-day, and that the house is dreadfully dull without him."

At this not very complimentary remark, Mrs. Polack appeared delighted, again caressing the girl's head.

"Rellen will be glad you have missed him, dear."

"Missed" is scarcely the word, aunty," responded Alix, with a shy blush, that was not unnoticed by the elder lady. "I want him twenty times a day. There are the rose-bushes to tie and train, and the gardener has not half the taste of Rellen. Then there are my drawing lessons. I have found an obstacle in the shape of that difficult foliage, and no one but Rellen can help me to overcome it. Then there are those slippers I finished for him last week,

and I want to give them to him. Oh, I can't begin to enumerate all the reasons why I want him to come home, but I do wish he would stay here all the time."

The old lady sighed, and looked tenderly down upon the girl, as she said:

"But he can't, dear. He is very rich, I suppose, and to make more money, as all rich men want to do, he must stay in London. What could he do in a retired country house like this? What could he do in a village like Horleigh?"

"I don't know, aunty, only he might buy a great estate, and spend his time in looking after it."

"He says he will do so, Alix, one of these days, when he shall have got enough money to support such a home. I wish he would be contented with the Lodge, but women are different from men. I am happy, since I know his whereabouts. There were years, Alix, when I did not know if he were living or dead. He says he wrote to me often, but the letters all miscarried—the posts are so wretched. It was at the time he was in India. I shall never forget what I endured then. Every winter's night when the wind blew, I fancied him upon the terrible ocean, and more than once I thought I heard his voice calling 'mother.' And in the summer, when the daisies sprinkled the fields, I wondered if he were dead, and daisies were blossoming over his lonely grave. It was a bitter time, dear Alix, but I am happy now," and Mrs. Polack's face softened, and tears gleamed in her eyes. "I think he would settle down even at the Lodge, if he were only to marry the right kind of wife."

She looked keenly at Alix, who crimsoned under her gaze.

"Why—why don't he marry?" asked the girl.

"Because, I think—for he has never told me—he thinks the girl he loves may refuse him, and his present uncertainty is better than a decided rejection."

Alix drooped her face over her flowers.

"Can you not guess what I mean, love?" whispered the old lady.

The maiden shook her head.

"Ah, yes, you do, you little coquette. Who is it makes my own home so pleasant, so Eden-like? Who is it sings to me when I am tired, cares for me like a daughter when I feel ill, and loves me as if I were her own mother? Who but Alix? And if I love you for your goodness, why may not Rellen? He loves beauty like yours, and is charmed by your wild, merry ways. Don't you love him too, dear?"

"I—I love him as a brother," the girl's voice answered softly, from under her drooping curls.

"Only as a brother, my love?" questioned the old lady, disappointedly.

"I—I can't tell that to any one but Rellen himself, if he should ask me," was the confused answer.

Mrs. Polack's face lighted up with sudden joy, and stooping, she raised the girl's face between her hands, and kissed it with a fervour and a tenderness appropriate to a fond mother.

She then released the blushing face, and said:

"Oh, Alix, if you knew how long I have cherished the hope of seeing you my son's wife. It has been the one dream of my life. It was for that I personally directed your education, for that I was so careful about your associates among the pupils, for that I have fostered your love for the beautiful. I have only you two in the whole world, and I do not know which I love best, you or Rellen. I could die happy, if you were but united to my boy."

"But I am too young."

"You are eighteen to-day."

"I have heard you say, aunty," and the girl's fingers trembled among her flowers, "that you did not approve of marriages between cousins."

"True, my love; I do not."

Alix looked up in questioning surprise.

"If my carelessly uttered remark, of a prejudice against intermarriage between cousins, has influenced you against Rellen, I shall never forgive myself," said Mrs. Polack, earnestly. "If it has caused you to repress any girlish liking for him, I shall never cease to grieve. For, Alix, love, you are not my niece. You are not Rellen's cousin!"

"Not your niece, aunty!" ejaculated Alix, in astonishment. "Not Rellen's cousin—why, Aunt Lettice!"

The pained tone in which she uttered that loving remonstrance touched the old lady to the heart.

"My darling, I have spoken truly, much as it grieves me to say it," she replied, sadly.

"But if I am not your niece, who am I?"

"That is a question I am unable to answer. I do not know even if your name be Alix Erle. I am almost as ignorant of your history as yourself."

The flowers dropped from Alix's lap upon the floor, the poppy wreath fell from her hand, and she exclaimed:

"But where did I come from, aunty? Where did you find me?"

"It is a short story, dear! but I had hoped to spare you the knowledge, which my own imprudent utterances have rendered necessary. Do not look so frightened, Alix."

And she took the girl's hands in her own.

"Your story is one of mystery; it may be wrong, but you must not forget that you have a home in my heart, as much as if you were legally my child!"

"Yes, aunty; but go on!"

"It was thirteen years ago, dear, one summer evening," said Mrs. Polack, thoughtfully, "that you came to me. I was sitting in this very room. It was my private drawing-room then, for the double drawing-rooms were required to be used at school-receptions and for visitors, and I loved to have a place where not even my assistants could intrude upon me. I was alone. My husband was not living with me, and Rellen was at his school. He was seventeen then. I remember that the night was sultry, and the windows were slightly ajar. I was looking over some bills, and had a candle lighted—only one, in order not to attract insects from the garden. The room was consequently half in shadow."

"Yes, aunty," said Alix, mentally wondering why the old lady was so careful in every detail.

"Well, my love, as I was sitting in that dim light, one of the servants—a new one, and unaware that I saw no visitors in this room—ushered in a gentleman, without previous announcement. He led by the hand a little child—yourself. I could not see his features distinctly, but he was tall, and more than half his face was buried in a bushy mass of sandy hair. He was a large man, if I remember rightly, an uncommonly large man, and very stout. I had not noticed all this when he addressed me, telling me that he had brought his niece to me to be educated. His manner was decidedly well-bred. I asked him for references, of course, and he replied that he had lived all his life abroad, and knew no one in England to whom he could refer me. He said he had met in Italy somewhere a young lady whose manners had enchanted him, and that, on becoming acquainted with her, she had informed him that she had been educated by me, and had advised him to bring his niece to me. The story did not look improbable, do you think so?"

"Not in the least, dear aunty."

"I was puzzled, Alix, and, in my dilemma, I turned my attention to the little child. She was a sweet little thing, with great dark eyes—that is, you were, love. I had always wished for a little girl of my own, and when I looked at you, it seemed to me that here was the very child I should have had. I was never so impressed with any other pupil. You were about five years old, and had such a sad, wistful little face. The gentleman sat down, and I took you in my arms. You were very quiet, scarcely replying to my questions, but I could see that your silence was not due to a lack of intelligence. I questioned the gentleman, and he told me that you were an orphan, whose parents had died in India. He said also that you were poor. In my pity for you, and fearing you might fall into less kind hands, I consented to keep you. Your uncle paid down for a year's care and instruction, with an additional sum for your clothing. He told me that your name was Alix Erie, and gave me the date of your birth. Whether either statement was correct, I have my doubts. He stated that he might not return to England for years, and that he should not see you again, until you had reached the years of womanhood. When the arrangements had been fully made, he arose to take his departure. He approached to embrace the listless, vacant little creature in my lap, and you received his kiss impassively without returning it. As he bent over you, I noticed that his beard was slightly loose at one side—that, in short, it was false!"

Alix uttered an exclamation of astonishment.

"Yes, love, the man was cleverly disguised! I was so taken aback by the discovery, and so frightened by it, that I could only clasp the child closer, and look at him. He did not detect my knowledge of his disguise, and soon took his departure. I think his very voice was assumed, Alix—it was so unnaturally hoarse. He sent your trunk from the station that very night, and an examination of its contents only served to increase the mystery!"

"How so, aunty?"

"Why the box itself and its contents were perfectly new. Every garment, including those you wore, were fresh from the shop. That they were shop-made, of the sort kept on hand for sale, was apparent at a glance. Not a thing seemed more than a month old—not even the little gilt prayer-book and bible. There was not a trace of the past to be found, not a relic of any previous life anywhere!"

"How strange!"

"You may well say so, Alix. There was no name

upon the clothing, no writing in the two books, which had never been opened, much less used. I doubted then that the man was your uncle, or indeed any relative of yours. I tried to question you, but I might as well have interrogated a stone. You continued just as listless and impassive, and finally, in alarm, I called in our school physician. He said that you had been drugged until your vitality was almost gone, and your memory nearly destroyed. He suggested that it might have been for the purpose of blotting the past from your mind, and, without telling him what I knew, I mentally decided that he must be right. There was something that that man who called himself your uncle wished you to forget. You received the tenderest care for the next few months, the wisest and best treatment, and you recovered from your listlessness and became the pet of the whole school. In caring for you, I learned to love you, and I taught you to call me 'aunt.' Everyone but my son thought you my niece."

"Did you ever see that man again, Aunt Lettice?"

"Never, love," replied Mrs. Polack, "but I have heard from him. Every year at this season he encloses to me a Bank of England note, in a letter, to be applied to your expenses. I said every year. I meant until four years ago, one year after I closed my school. These letters were invariably posted from some large Continental city—sometimes Paris, sometimes Madrid, sometimes Rome, sometimes Geneva, and again Hamburg, Vienna. They were brief, and written in a back-hand, as if for disguise. They contained invariably an injunction to fit you to become a governess, as his circumstances would not allow him to maintain you in idleness."

"Did you answer the letters, aunty?"

"Not often. Once I addressed a note to Mr. Erie at Zurich—he was there that year—telling him of the improvement in your health, but he took no notice of the letter, and I never wrote again. As I have not received a line nor a penny from him for four years, I begin to think that his restless spirit may have worn itself out—that, in short, he may be dead! I should not grieve if he were, for then I should never have a fear that he would come and take you from me."

"But I would not go, aunty. This is my home. You have been a mother to me, and you need me now you are growing old. Who can take care of you so well as I?"

"No one, my little Alix," and her friend bestowed upon her a look of yearning tenderness. "I could not spare you now. I could easier do without Rellen's presence than yours. And that reminds me how Rellen always loved you. He used to come home during the vacations when the young ladies were gone, and from the first he almost worshipped you. When he came home a few weeks ago, after his absence of years, almost his first question was for 'little Alix,' and when you came dancing in, I could see how he admired you. He has visited us often during the last few weeks, and I fancy I am not the principal attraction," and she smiled archly.

But Alix scarcely heard the last sentences.

She was thinking with a swelling heart of the kindness she had ever experienced at the hands of good Mrs. Polack, and with an impulsive movement she flung her arms about the old lady's neck and sobbed upon her bosom.

"My poor little girl! my precious Alix! my own darling!" were the comforting words with which her friend endeavoured to soothe her. "Why do you weep so, love?"

"Oh, Aunt Lettice, you and Rellen have been so good to me all my life long. But for you and him what might not my life have been? My heart is running over with gratitude and love for you both!"

Mrs. Polack smiled with pleasure at the mention of love for her son.

"You owe us nothing, Alix," she said. "You have repaid us by your goodness, truthfulness and invariable sweetness of temper. I may as well tell you a little secret, my child. When I saw how Rellen admired you when you first came, and he was then but a lad of seventeen, I began to hope that some time or other you would become his wife. You cannot tell how delighted I have been, because you have met no one else whom you have admired, and you do not know the happy hours I have spent in planning your future as Rellen's wife. If I could only live to see your children playing about my knees, Alix, your children, with Rellen for their father! But how excited you are, my love. This revelation has disturbed you!"

Alix struggled to regain her calmness, and resumed her seat upon the cushion at Mrs. Polack's feet.

"I wonder," said the old lady, changing the subject of conversation adroitly, "if Rellen will be here to-night. He promised certainly to come home on your birthday. Perhaps there's a letter for us at the

post-office now. I think I'll send Michael over, as he has not been since the earliest post, three hours ago!"

"Let me go, aunty," said Alix, eagerly; "the walk will do me good, and I want to get his letters."

"You may go, dear," assented the ex-school mistress, concealing her delight at the girl's assertion, and believing it to be an indication of love for her son. "Hasten, though, for I count the minutes during your absence!"

With a pre-occupied air Alix gathered up her flowers, crowding them absently into the porcelain vases upon the mantel-piece, and then she retired from the room with a thoughtful step.

She soon returned, with a pretty round hat on her head, and a large black lace mantle draping her tiny figure, and, after kissing her friend, set out on her walk.

It was a pleasant road, bordered by blossoming hawthorn hedges, flowers sprinkling the green roadside, with the shade of trees, and the murmur of a brook across its course.

The pretty village of Horleigh lay in a mass of greenery below the long, gentle slope—the village where lovely little Alix Erie was welcomed as a beam of sunshine by every one, from the portly squire and the grave old judge, down to the apple-woman at the corner, and the rough street children.

For Alix, with her pleasant, sunny ways, her kind heart, and marvellous beauty, was a general favourite.

She walked with unusual gravity along the road and up the village street, not forgetting to bestow a nod here and a bow there, but with such seriousness that the street-children looked askance at each other, the apple-woman muttered a blessing, and the judge, whom she met at the office door, inquired if anything were wrong at Anerly Lodge.

There was a letter for Mrs. Polack, but it was not in the delicate handwriting of the absent Rellen, and, with a slower step, Alix returned home.

"There is a letter for you, aunty," she said, entering the morning room, "but I do not know the handwriting. There was not a line from Rellen."

Mrs. Polack expressed her disappointment, and declared her son would not fail to come, and then she took the letter offered her by Alix.

At the sight of the handwriting, she uttered a cry of grief.

"Oh, Alix," she said, "I dare not open the letter. It is from that man—your uncle. It is postmarked London. What can he have returned to England for? He said he should come for you when you became a woman. Can he be coming for you now?"

The letter fell into her lap, and she looked up pitifully into the girl's suddenly pale and terrified face.

(To be continued.)

HALF-TINTS IN PAINTING.—The great difficulty in shading is the management of the half-tints. Any one can make an extreme shade of black; and if the right feeling for half-tints and semi-tones is not a natural one—something analogous to that of a good ear for music—it can be to a great extent acquired, though in some cases it will demand a much greater amount of practical experience and observation than in others, before they begin to perceive the many varieties of tone which are spread upon the surface of an object, especially if it be an irregular one. But when we have to add colour in connexion with light and shade, we go farther into a field of change and variety that is unbounded. And here is the test of the painter. It is the management of the minor tones which makes all the difference between a first-rate artist and a common country sign-painter. The latter may paint a red cow sufficiently well to answer the purpose of giving a title to the village ale-house. We will grant that he has the ability to make a tolerable representation of the animal in outline, but when he attempts to paint it, he will do nothing more than fill up the outline with red, and darken the parts in shade with black, because he can see nothing farther; but the eye of the true artist would seize upon the innumerable tints spread all over the surface—the various degrees of colour influenced by the position and strength of the light, some parts more brilliant, some more subdued, intermingled with grays of various hues in every portion—added to which are the reflections of colour and of light amongst the shadows, some warm, some cold: in short, to name all the changes and tones that would require his special attention can only be done by him who is able to paint them. Here, then, is the secret why one painter is greater than another; and their comparative excellence is determined by their ability to perceive and represent few or many of the infinite varieties of tones scattered over every object in nature.



[MATTHEW IS FOUND.]

ELLEN LAMBERT'S TWENTY YEARS.

By M. T. CALDOR.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It was midnight, and profound peacefulness rested over the home under the sycamores. The sleep of innocence and trust wrapt the spirits of the Claxton family, and no dream of evil, no foreboding whisper, came to disturb the calmness of their slumber.

The glorious moonlight silvered the mossy roof, brought out picturesque shadows among the gables, and sparkled amidst the ivy-hung walls.

The rustling boughs of the overhanging trees held a dreamy whispering, but there was no moan of grief, or sigh of foreboding in their murmuring speech.

Stout-armed Ruth, tired out with her faithful service, would not have heard, had a burglar crossed her chamber with ever so rude a tread. She lay stretched out with wide-open mouth, and long-drawn noisy breath, in the room opening from that in which her mistress slept, and where the poor paralytic passed the night, still keeping his uncomfortable position.

Bella, lovely in the rich moonlight as an ivory statue, with one white arm flung carelessly, in childish fashion, around her graceful head, was far away in happy dreams, glad realization of her secret hopes, following Lord Windermere's loving guidance.

Nolan's long, deep respiration from the couch in the sitting-room, told that his watchful vigilance was relaxed, and even Nina, the earnest, anxious, faithful little guardian of the family weal, had, for the time, slipped off the burden from her brave young shoulders, and was sweetly tranquillized by slumber's magic spell.

All this peace, innocence, and trustfulness without, and within, and around, was a more terrible foe than had yet assailed them.

A subtle, wreathing smoke spread silently and gradually. Nolan on his couch and Ruth up-stairs began to have disturbing visions, a suffocating weight on the chest, a smarting of throat and eyelid, and yet neither shook off the heavy slumber which was such harm and woful hindrance to them. The silence was broken by low snapping and crackling. Oiled wainscot knit itself fiercely to its doom. Boarding, a century dried, received the flaming kiss of out-lapping tongues, as tinder catches

a spark. Then a carpet, and presently a curtain, smouldered with reddening veins. The thick smoke, with its insidious, soporific poison, filled the whole house, but a light that was fiercer than the silver glow of the moonshine, a red, angry glare was dispersing it. And yet, though all the sleepers stirred uneasily, not one awoke to consciousness.

But help came shortly from without. A late passer, a watcher from a sick bed, came running up to the burning house, and with reckless wrath broke a window.

"Fire! Fire! Are you all dead? Wake up, wake up. Your house is all on fire."

The cool, restoring air pouring into the sitting-room, the loud outcry, roused Nolan.

He started up, stared wildly around him, and forgetting his accident, leaped upon his feet. He fell back, but did not relax his efforts. Dragging himself to the door, he shouted in frantic tones:

"Ruth, Ruth, for heaven's sake, waken! Nina, Nina! Oh heavens, that I must lie grovelling here like a block. Fire! Fire!"

The man without came through the broken window. In a few minutes more, the whole family were rushing out of their beds, shivering, trembling, bewildered with the suddenness of the scene.

Ruth went valiantly towards the water buckets, but the sight she saw, sent her rushing back with fiercer strides. The kitchen was one light blaze, the sitting-room so fierce in its heat, it took away her breath, when she put her head into the doorway. There was fire here, there, everywhere!

She gave one great sob of anguish, and ran up-stairs.

"Miss Nina, Miss Bella, for the love of heaven, stop for nothing! Wrap blankets around your mother, and get her out. I must look after the master. There is not a moment to lose."

Nina, whiter than any ghost, seized a blanket, and leaving her clothing half fastened rushed into her mother's room. The little woman was shaking like a leaf, but she had put her morning wrapper around her husband, and was pushing his chair towards the door.

"Ruth will see to father. Come quickly, mother," said Nina, in a voice which seemed to her like someone's else.

"Where is Nolan?" demanded Mrs. Claxton.

Nina gasped rather than answered.

"Great heavens! can he be down there in the flames? Hasten, mother, the staircase is already catching."

"I can go alone, my child. Oh Ruth, where is Ruth?"

That faithful creature came up the hot staircase with giant strides.

"Hurry, hurry! We've got Nolan out. He lay there like a log. The man is coming to help me with the master."

Bella was shrieking, but Nina had gathered up her mother's clothing and flung it out of the window. Even now the floor was quivering.

Ruth caught up the helpless father, and cried out sharply:

"Help me, Bella, take his feet."

Bella came like one in a dream, and between them they got him safely out upon the green.

They heard Nina's wild scream behind.

"Floy, where is Floy?"

She ran back, and in a moment after came tottering down with the still slumbering child in her arms. Not too soon. As if it had been a house of paper, the old woodwork within fairly crumbled and melted beneath the devouring element. The forlorn, shuddering, bewildered family stood there in a wretched group, when the townspeople began to pour towards the scene, but their poor old home was one blazing mass of tottering ruin.

Nolan had revived, and lying on the grass, did his bravest to keep up a show of manliness. He had a secret of his own, but there was misery enough before them, without betraying it yet. He had injured his ankle severely in his frantic efforts to be of service, and was well aware, by the intense pain, that the hurt was worse than at first.

Nina found an old chair under the trees, and wrapping her mother closely in a blanket had seated her in it. Floy, sobbing, with all a child's abandonment of grief, was kneeling before the chair, her head buried in her mother's lap, to hide from her sight the wretched spectacle of her burning home.

Mr. Claxton remained just as they had placed him on the ground, but his face was full of vague alarm and restlessness.

Poor Ruth ran distractedly from one to another of the townspeople.

"Is there no one with a Christian heart in them, to offer these hapless innocents a house to shelter them from the night air?" asked she.

The bystanders looked at each other with vague mistrust.

"There's Jason Morton's house empty," said one.

"But I've promised it to be ready next week," responded Norton, promptly.

"And Mick West has a cottage close by," suggested another.

"Sure, and Madame Lambert has spoken for it, for one of the new hands."

"May heaven forgive you! I know what it is. You're afraid of that serpent," said Ruth, flinging out her great hands in a wrathful gesture. "But heaven sees. Remember that."

A woman stepped out from the crowd. "I've a bit of a house. It's a poor place, but they are welcome to it, till they can find a better."

"May heaven love you, may heaven bless you, and give you every blessing your heart can ask!" cried Ruth, bursting into her first tears.

Nina had heard all.

She came forward, laying a timid hand on the woman's shoulder.

"Kind friend," said she, "you shall not lose by this. We have some good friends in the town who will help us now. We have a hundred pounds in bank notes now."

And then Nina stopped suddenly, with a slight shriek, and made a frantic movement to rush towards the burning house.

The hundred pounds! A jolt! almost had she not locked it safely in the drawer of the old secretaire? And was not the secretaire burning there? Oh, cruel, pitiless! when that money was everything to them, now more than all things else, that it should be turning before her very eyes into mocking ashes!

She went back to where Nolan lay writhing in pain, but keeping heroic silence.

"Nolan, Nolan," asked Nina, "what shall I do?"

"Heaven only knows, Nina," answered Nolan, in a low, hoarse voice. "I only wish I had been taken away before I lived to see this sight."

"Nolan, Nolan, don't fail me, don't give up," implored Nina, a sob catching her voice.

"I will try, Nina," answered Nolan, suppressing a groan. "If Kent Forsay would only come, or even Miss Darnall. In this extremity it will be forgiven us if we send to her. Is Mr. White, or any of his people, among the crowd?"

"I do not see them. They are all afraid, Nolan, you know of whom. But a woman has offered us a shelter."

"Accept it then, by all means. It is frightful for my mother to be exposed to this damp, night air."

"And you will come too. Bella will help you and Ruth, and I must get my father along."

"Poor father! what must he think of all this?"

"Nina, have you a shilling in your pocket?" asked Nolan, in a husky whisper, "every farthing of my money was in the secretaire."

"I supposed so," returned Nina, dearly, "and the hundred pounds which was to make us all so rich and happy was there also. Nolan, Nolan, how do you think the fire occurred?"

"I have not stopped to think of that. The house was old, and we have been unable to attend to repairs. Surely, surely, with all her fendishness, she could not be guilty of such an awful crime as this? And yet Ruth was always careful, and it seemed to be burning everywhere at once. I don't know, I don't want to think about it. I shall go mad if I do. Get mother to safety, Nina, darling. In the morning, our two good friends will come, and it may be things will then look less threatening."

Nina went to her mother. The kind Samaritan woman had already extended her help. Mrs. Claxton rose with something of her usual sweetness and graceful dignity.

"I will go at once, if you wish, but I am somehow fascinated by the blaze of the poor old house. It has been a good home for us, after all; we have been very happy there, my children. But it is of no use to struggle. The malediction has its power—if only the end were come—and over!"

A fit of coughing interrupted her. Someone among the crowd had manhood enough to come forward.

"I have a horse and wagonet. If the lady and any of the family wish to be carried anywhere I'm at their service."

"Thank you, oh, thank you," said Nina.

"Oh, Nina, Nina, to think we are to be thankful for such a favour," whispered Bella, despairingly.

"Come, mother. Floy, darling, don't cry, keep the shawl around you, and come, both of you," said Nina, in her steady, encouraging voice, knowing very well it would not do for her to give a single sign of the despairing anguish in her heart. And then she went up to her father, and clasped tenderly the one useful hand.

"Dear father, you see we have trouble to-night. The house is burnt down, and you must go somewhere else. What a mercy, Nolan, that you made this out-of-door chair on wheels for the garden! It will be his only refuge now."

She had spoken to him according to her wont, in a gentle, soothing voice, and as though she expected him to understand every word she spoke. For two years such an address had received only a broken, disjointed sentence or monosyllable for reply.

What was her astonishment then to see her father turn upon her an agitated, convulsed face, and lift up the left hand, which for so long a while had laid limp and powerless in his lap, like a dead thing.

He pointed towards the house.

"Nina, my daughter, this is some great calamity, and I am not able to help you. Where is Guy, Nina? He should be here, to take all this from a girl like you."

For a moment Nina was unable to answer a word, but stood staring at him in surprise. The next she comprehended that the great shock and excitement of the night had wrought strangely and mysteriously upon the torpid brain, throwing off at least for a time its palsy.

Fearful of harming him by any new grief, she returned in as calm a voice as possible:

"Guy is not here, you know, dear father. He has gone away. And Nolan has hurt his ankle and cannot walk. We will soon be in better order. Do not fret yourself."

"Your mother, Nina, where is your mother?"

"I will bring her here to you. She is just going into the man's wagonet, to be carried to another house."

"I will go to her," said Mr. Claxton, firmly.

Nina stood trembling, hoping, fearing she scarcely knew what.

"Yes," said he, in a musing voice, "I ought to go, and I will."

As he spoke, he put out his hands, steadied them on the arm of the rough chair, and rose to his feet. At that moment Ruth came hurrying back from getting her mistress safely into the wagonet with what few blankets had been thrown from the upper window.

She saw the movement, and read on Nina's face, lighted up by the glare of the fire, and the silver gleam of the moonlight, that something startling had taken place.

"Good heavens! good heavens!" ejaculated Ruth.

Nina held up a warning finger.

"Ah, Ruth, honest soul, so you are here, too. Lend me that stout arm of yours. I am strangely numb in my limbs, and they drag after me like lead. I won't work any more amidst that poisonous white lead. It is killing me, I am sure. I want to go to Mrs. Claxton, Ruth. Where is Mrs. Claxton?"

"She's there by the gate, waiting for you to come, sir. You've been ill, sir, and you mustn't be afraid to lean on me."

Nina stood a moment watching her father moving along—with slow and feeble steps, to be sure, but yet moving—and then flew on before them.

"I must prepare mamma. He must not receive any shock."

She reached the vehicle, where her mother sat like a statue, staring with glittering, but dry eyes at the burning building, which sent its showers of cruel sparks far up into the sky, and scorched, shrivelled, and blackened the drooping boughs of the sycamores, which had kept their guard so faithfully for so many years over a happy home, but which were, alas! to wait and sigh when the morning came, over a blackened heap of smoking cinders.

"Mother, dear mother," cried Nina, eagerly and joyfully, "do not look so bewildered with grief and horror. There is a gleam of gladness amidst all this blackness. The sudden shock has affected my father in the most unlooked-for manner. He talks plainly and intelligently, mother, he has recurred to the time when he was working in the lead-mill. He is coming to you—and he is walking, mother."

"Walking, Nina? My husband, Arthur Claxton, walking," almost shrieked Mrs. Claxton.

"Yes, dear mamma. Hush, here he comes. Be careful not to shock him. Ruth must go with you, to look after you both. And I will stay to help Nolan."

Ruth helped on the faltering steps.

Mrs. Claxton leaned out and watched them coming with wide, shining eyes.

"Arthur!" said she.

Only that single word. But what a world of tremulous hope, of tenderest affection, of half frantic joy, the tone held.

"My dear Florence," replied Mr. Claxton, slowly. "I am so thankful to find you safe. If you will believe it, I am so bewildered in my mind by this catastrophe, that I cannot seem to remember anything at all. Everything puzzles me, but I am so thankful to get to you, my dear."

"Come here, Arthur, on the seat beside me. Oh, thank you, sir, help him carefully."

And, by dexterous assistance, the feet, which weighed down like clogs of lead, were lifted up, and Mr. Claxton was put in by the little lady's side. How her eyes shone and sparkled!

The misery, sudden shock, and sharp sorrow were all forgotten.

The little thin, white, snow-flake hands, creeping lovingly to those other purple, misshapen ones, and the sweet soft lines of her face came out in wonderful distinctness, which, with the feverish crimson on her cheeks, restored to them something like her youthful beauty. All the bewilderment and vague uneasiness faded out of his countenance also.

Still clinging to her hands, and looking with wistful yearning into her face, he repeated, with a happy, contented smile:

"It is all right now, Florence, it is all right now."

"Yes," said Mrs. Claxton, looking back at the red glare of the fire, her voice hushed and solemn, "it is all right."

Ruth, on the front seat with the driver, with the frightened, sobbing Floy in her arms, heard, and the hot tears went pouring down her rough face.

"Heaven knows best," thought she, "it's not for the likes of me to be judging of his dealings. And though there looks to me like nothing better than starvation before us all, I won't say a word. If He can make such a miracle come out of this night's foul work, why shouldn't we trust Him for the rest?"

And as Ruth kept up her courage, when they arrived at a very poor and not particularly clean cottage.

"It's the best I've got," said the owner, who was already there, trying to clear it up a little, "and, as I said before, you are heartily welcome to it."

"Which makes it as pleasant as if it were a palace," answered Ruth. "If over these poor souls come into their rights they will make this up to you. And if they don't, heaven will."

"I ain't sure that I ought to be thanked," said the woman, struck with sudden compunction by the fervour of Ruth's tone. "I ain't so sure that I do it, half as much out of pity for these poor people, the Claxtons, as out of spite to her—you understand I mean that woman who hates them so."

"Bless your heart. I like you all the better for that," says honest Ruth; "has she done you an ill turn?"

"She was hard on me, hard and cruel at a time when I could least bear it, and I hate her for it," said the woman, stooping down to the droplap, to blow up the flames she had started under a pile of wood.

"She'll get her reward some time, somewhere, the Lord isn't blind nor deaf," said Ruth, "that's one comfort for us. Dear heart! what's this coming?"

"A cart with some furniture," answered the woman. "I thought they would be ashamed of their hard-heartedness. I wouldn't make no questioning about it. You see, most of the people here in one way or another are beholden to her for their houses, or their work, and there's none as likes to lose them, which is only natural. They'll all send what they can, and be thankful to you to make us talk about it."

Ruth went out to the door, drawing her horny palm across her eyes.

"To think—to think," wailed she, "the Claxtons have come to be grateful for a few loads of cottager's furniture."

But she brought the welcome pieces in, put up a bed, set around the chairs, hurried the dishes and eatables into a closet, and came back again into the room where the fire was burning cheerfully. Mrs. Claxton sat on a rough bench beside her husband. Their hands were still interlocked, and they were talking in a low, soft voice. Ruth looked at them for a moment, and her tears fell faster than ever. But she did not like that hectic glow on her mistress's cheek. Floy was sound asleep on the blankets.

"I'm thankful to the good body who brought this tea and teapot," said Ruth, and pretended that it was the smoke, as she poured out the boiling water, which made her work so vigorously with her handkerchief. And then she took them some tea, and coaxed them both to take a cup. Ah, how strange it seemed to see the master and mistress taking tea together! And Ruth, good honest soul, drew a sigh of satisfaction, as she perceived that the delicate, fastidious little lady never discovered that the cup was coarse ware, and not the old China bequeathed from the Lamberts.

Then Ruth solaced herself with a draught of the fragrant beverage, and returned again to her labours. For another load had arrived, and as she went out to meet them, she said:

"Heaven bless this deed to you all! I'll ask no names now, but when the Claxtons come to their rights, they'll ask to have every one of you made known."

The townspeople saw that their motives were understood, and in rather sheepish fashion retreated from the scene.

Ruth worked vigorously, only now and then stopping to set her candles in a secure place, with a wise shake of the head.

"We'll have no more damage from fire. I'll watch and fight against that."

She had everything as comfortable as could be expected, and coaxing her master and mistress to go to bed in the inner room, Ruth took another look at Floy, then went out to the door and stood looking over where the glow of the fire was dying out, but the wider light of sunrise was kindling its radiance.

"What has become of Miss Nina, and Bella? And where is Master Nolan?" she asked herself anxiously.

Sure enough, where were they?

CHAPTER XIX.

VERY early that morning, after Mat Rigby's midnight reconnaissance at the King's Arms, a grave-faced young man presented himself at the door of Miss Davenal's little sitting-room, and asked for that young lady.

Dixon and Aunt both answered the summons. The former greeted him with an eager ejaculation of surprise and pleasure.

"Oh, sir, I'm thankful to see you! You have come to tell us something about our mistress."

"Then she is not here," exclaimed the young man, in a tone of keen alarm. "My fears were prophetic!"

"She went out to walk yesterday, just before noon. She told me she should be home early in the evening, and she would not have Dixon come for her," volunteered Aunt, in an agitated voice. "I thought, to be sure, she was visiting at that pleasant home of the Claxtons, and had no alarm when she did not appear, even when midnight came; and this morning even, I had no doubt but she had spent the night with them. But oh! sir, Dixon has been there, and they know nothing about her. She was not there at all. We have looked all over the town where it seems possible for her to go, but not a sign or trace of her can we find. Dixon says there's nothing over to be called unexpected, where Miss Davenal is concerned; that she will come some time to-day; but I am frightened—I am terribly frightened."

"She is in danger, in trouble of some sort; I have been sure of it!" exclaimed the young man, in excited tones. "I knew it from the moment I heard her call me at the dead of night."

"You heard her call!" repeated Dixon, in astonishment.

"I did. She called me twice. I was so powerfully impressed by it that I came over here last night, and looked over the whole place. Have you no clue, nothing to tell you in what direction she went?"

Aunt related all she knew, and Dixon added the fact, which now acquired significance, that there had come a letter for her in the morning.

"Oh, yes," said the young man; "I knew of it;" and then a sudden look of anger appeared in his gray eyes. "So he! he went away in the morning. Is it possible she was in some way enticed to follow? No, no; it is absurd! impossible!"

"One note was lying tossed carelessly into her work-basket," said Aunt, as she brought it.

The young gentleman flushed hotly while he read it. "It is nothing," said he; "it clears Kent Forsay from any suspicion."

"But it was the other letter, the one directed so queerly," pursued Dixon; "there is nothing to be seen of that; and don't you remember, Aunt, how you said she went all over of a strange flash of joy when she read it. If there's mischief, be sure it came from that."

"Tell me exactly how she was dressed," said the young man, hastily. "If she does not come by noon I shall start in search of her; for she called me," he repeated.

Aunt gave him every particular; and, now she came to remember it, there was something peculiar in Miss Davenal's manner and looks when she said good-bye. The young man did not stop to hear half her dreary conjectures and alarms, but hurried away. He made his appearance again at noon, to learn that there was still no message or tidings of the young lady.

That afternoon Madame Lambert received a humble request for leave of absence on the part of her watchman. He named a trusty fellow who consented to fill his place for a week or so, and as she made no objections—he thought her strangely preoccupied and absent-minded—Mat Rigby took his seat in the train, which left that afternoon in the opposite direction from Greyslope from that of the King's Arms.

Varimont left town the same day. He announced

his intention of doing so, the day previous, to half-a-dozen different people, his landlady among the rest, carelessly remarking that his business might detain him a week or a month. He went down to the station, his travelling satchel on his arm, and bade the bystanders who recognized him an unusually gracious adieu. It happened rather oddly that he stumbled into the carriage where Mat Rigby was encoined, but he beat a hasty retreat, and took another. Mat, whose lynx eye was always alert, took occasion to watch closely at every station, and he was somewhat surprised to discover that Varimont, although he had taken a through ticket, left the train at the very next station. He was sorely tempted to stop himself, and watch the movements, but he had learned from the guard that a lady, dressed in a gray alpaca, with a Rob Roy shawl, closely veiled, had taken this train at D—, and left at L—. Therefore at L— was the goal of his vague alarm and hope.

His surprise might have deepened into a more powerful sentiment, had he followed Varimont's movements, and seen him mount a fleet horse which was mysteriously in readiness for his approach, and ride slowly back towards D—, which he reached only a short time before midnight. His proceedings here were eccentric and significant.

At a lonely road, a sort of bye lane leading across to a turning from the highway, Varimont dismounted, led his horse carefully into the underbrush, and, securing him there, set off with a small carpet-bag on his arm, across the fields towards the town.

Two hours afterwards he re-appeared, coming swiftly and stealthily in the shade of the roadside shrubbery, and mounting his horse, rode, at a break-neck pace, back in the direction from which he had come.

The next day Varimont showed himself conspicuously in the town he had announced as his destination, even wrote a letter to the fruiterer. Who suspected that there had been any break in the journey, or doubted that Varimont had been all the while busied with his own affairs?

While the red glare of the burning house was illuminating the whole sky, and the town was rising, Madame Lambert, wrapped in a thick shawl, sat at a window of the black-shrouded chamber. She had put aside the sable curtains, and her face was pressed against the window, and her wild eyes were peering forth. She had caught the first red streak that flamed up in the distance, and as it brightened and broadened, she danced up and down in a wild frenzy of delight. She was certainly more like a maniac than a rational being, as she sat there, glaring out upon the night with those triumphant eyes, muttering her fierce anathemas, or wild, triumphant gibes.

She was so full of excited and tumultuous emotion, it was evident she could not rest, and suddenly she yielded to an impulse which had been irritating her all the evening. She went to her inner closet, took out a black cloak with a close hood to it, and wrapped herself carefully in it; then she produced a small night lantern, lighted the wick, and as soon as it was well ignited, she closed the slide and secreted the lantern under her cloak, and taking a bunch of keys from the chain which hung always from her waist, she unlocked the door opening upon the balcony, and passed out, across the balcony, to another door, which opened upon a flight of steps, with locked doors at either end, which descended to the garden below. As she passed through, she locked the doors behind her, and put the keys into her pocket. She crossed the garden slowly, but with steady, unflinching steps, went down the back avenue, and came out upon a narrow road leading away from the business portion of the town towards the cemetery, a large tract of land occupying the base of a hill, which sloped in graceful knolls on one side close upon the street, but at the other descended sharp and precipitous to a damp, gloomy-looking meadow, half uncleared swamp land, where vapoury mists hung low at night, and black shadows brooded even at noonday. "Witch's Hollow" was the name it went by in the vicinity, and a venture-some lad was he who dared take the path which wound from the upper road through this tract, and thence led up again into the cemetery itself. Wild goblin stories were told of what had been seen there. White figures and black figures, and dancing lights flitting to and fro. And there is little question but that the stoutest-hearted man in the town would have quailed a little to have walked through "Witch's Hollow" after midnight. Yet Madame Lambert bent her steps this very way, walking as swiftly as her years allowed, and with no faltering or hesitancy.

The bright moonlight, and the increasing glare of the fire, spared her any need of the lantern, but presently she picked up a stout stick lying opportunely in the path, and used it for a cane. By its

help she mounted the steep ascent, gained the cemetery by a path which was not under observation from the street, and took her way towards an elaborately built tomb, with the Lambert crest carved in solid stone over the massive iron door.

The great iron key was already in her hand, she made a movement to fit it into the heavy padlock, but in the very act paused, and listened.

It was not supernatural fear which sent such a tremble into her hand. There was a noise within the tomb; a faint light shone through a crevice where the framework of the door was broken a little. How her eyes snapped! what a fierce curl twitched back the thin lip! Putting both her hands upon the door she swung it open, and stretched out an arm in fierce denunciation.

Down in the gloomy depths of the tomb, among the decaying relics of costly coffins and human bones, a man was kneeling. A little pocket lantern, similar to that Madame Lambert herself carried, stood on the floor, and one of the marble flags was lifted up, revealing an aperture beneath.

At the noise of the creaking door he turned hastily, and the movement upset the lantern and extinguished it. There stood the figure with the threatening, outstretched arm, looking unnaturally tall, defined against the light, and at its elevated position above him. The lantern, under the cloak which, by the movement of the arm, was opened some way, gave just enough light to make it seem that a lurid flame played around the whole form.

With a wild scream of deadly terror the man sprang up, dropping a bag, with some chinking contents, upon the ground, and rushing up the steps darted under the outstretched arm and flew, rather than ran, down the walk into the path leading to the street, and disappeared in the field on the other side. There stood Madame Lambert like a stony statue, still with outstretched arm, upright on the threshold of the tomb. Half-an-hour elapsed, and she had not moved, not so much as the quiver of a finger. The catalepsy she so much dreaded and feared was upon her again.

When at last the strange spell was removed and a shiver ran through her frame, she dashed forward fiercely, vociferating:

"Wretch! villain! thief! So I have come at the right moment to catch you at your work!"

And then she stopped, drew forth her lantern, lifting up the slide, and casting the light into the tomb. She saw the raised slab, the bag lying on the pavement, but where was the kneeling man?

The truth gradually dawned upon her.

"Another turn! another turn!" she muttered fiercely; "will it always come when I most require my strength?"

And then with slow and tottering steps, she went down into the tomb, taking pains to remove the padlock, and keep it with her, while she drew the door to its fastenings. There was the broken lantern. She took it up and examined it carefully.

"It was he, without a doubt. Poor worm! Does he think to blind me? Let me see what he has been at."

She sat down deliberately, and raised bag after bag from the secret depository under the marble flagging, examined each one carefully, and after counting them, compared the number with a memorandum on the ivory tablet she drew from her pocket.

The one left at the foot of the steps made the number correct.

"I came in time," said Madame Lambert, coldly unmindful that the coffin of her dead husband reposed close beside the hand that was counting out his smuggled gold so greedily. "That poor fool was frightened out of his villany. But I will take care there shall be no opportunity for a repetition. I will have a new and intricate lock put upon the door, and he shall never be trusted again with the key. The gold shall be moved, too, as soon as it is settled if my wishes are to be realized. I thought the halter around monsieur's throat would make sure of his silence and faithfulness. But he is getting rebellious thoughts into his head. He must be attended to."

She put back the bags, carefully dropped the slab into its place, and moved one end of a coffin over it. Then, picking up the broken lantern as well as her own, she went up out of the tomb, replaced the padlock, locked it securely, and returned to Greyslope by the route she had come.

But the effort required for all this had exhausted her strength. She fairly tottered when she mounted the stairs leading up to the balcony, and the hand which turned the keys shook like a leaf in a storm.

Once in her room she threw herself upon the bed, without removing her cloak, and almost sobbed:

"I am growing weaker. I feel it! I know it!"

My twenty years will slip out of my grasp if I do not have a care. I must hasten my work. Oh, for some potent elixir to give me back my strength."

And yet presently she crept off from the bed, went to the window, and looked out towards the fading fire, and laughed fiercely.

"At least one powerful blow has fallen. I can forgive the poor wretch for his cupidity, since I have foiled him, and he has done his work this night so well. I wonder if it be a happy household down below! If only I were strong and well I would go down and feast my eyes upon the scene."

She stopped and listened.

Some one was coming up the stairs along the corridor.

In a moment more there was a tap at her door. The new watchman was anxious to give proof of his wakefulness and attention.

"Are you awake, Madame Lambert? I am positive I heard some one turning a key on the other side of the hall. And there is an alarm of fire. I should judge it to be a little out of the town by the light."

"Yes, I heard it, and I went out on the balcony to look. It was my closing the door and locking it you must have heard. Everything is safe and right here. Go back to your post."

Maria had roused up also, not by her mistress's movements, for she was used to all sorts of disturbances from that chamber, but the watchman's voice awoke her.

"A fire! You don't say so. Where is it?" demanded Maria, in her accustomed trepidation.

"Go back to bed, you idiot," thundered Madame Lambert.

And poor Maria was silenced.

Then Madame Lambert, dropping a sedative into her tiny glass of wine, drank it off, and crept into her bed without a single throb of remorse, although her imagination had pictured the scene at the burning home of the Claxtons but little short of its horrors.

She was up early in the morning, and had a locksmith called to the house.

"I have lost one of the keys to the padlock which gives admittance to the Lambert tomb," said she, beginning with her usual promptness the moment he crossed her threshold. "And it makes me uneasy lest it should fall into evil hands, and sacrilegious feet cross that sacred threshold. Have you any lock secure and burglar-proof, that you can put on to replace it? If not, send to London at once, and get such a one."

"I think I have the very article you need. It was left with me as a specimen, by the inventor," replied the locksmith.

"Bring it this very morning. I will go with you myself to the tomb. Have you more than one?"

"Only that one, madam."

"Excellent. Be careful that no other is allowed to appear in the town. Go home at once, and return with it as speedily as you may. The coach shall be ready to take us to the cemetery."

The new lock was put upon the tomb, and the old one removed that very morning.

Madame Lambert walked slowly to and fro while the man was performing the task. Once she went over to the brow of the precipice and looked down into "Witch's Hollow." It looked blacker than ever, in contrast with the cheery sunshine above, and the stirs surface of the great pool lay gleaming darkly like a mirror of pitch. Madame Lambert was a little startled to see a figure flitting on the banks of this pool with a long pole in her hands, and she went on a little farther towards the circuitous path, by which she made her night ascents, to see what it meant. In an instant after she turned back carelessly. It was Mother Moonshine, and her basket half filled with herbs stood on the ground close beside her.

Madame Lambert went back to the locksmith, and when he had completed the task, put the secret key into her pocket, and murmured:

"So, ho, monsieur! you will find your game blocked. When you make your next unauthorized visit, it will not be quite so easy for you to enter."

And then she entered her carriage and drove away, quite unconscious that an event of no small significance to her, was at that very moment transpiring in the dreaded "Witch's Hollow."

The woman below exploring the black, sullen depths of the pool with her long stick, caught its sharp iron hook presently on some object beneath the water, and after losing it a dozen times, and yet perseveringly returning to the effort, she succeeded at last in dragging the heavy burden to the surface, when she seized it with both hands, unmindful of its slimy covering, and lifted it out upon the grass. She wiped off the mud with her apron, and turned it over, with eyes triumphant and yet agast. There was little question concerning what it was. It was

the outer frame of a hand organ. There was a brass plate, with the maker's name and the number on it. It was so covered with dirt that it was at first illegible, but the woman dug it out with a small knife which she took from her pocket.

"At last! at last!" muttered she, looking down with wild eyes into the pool. "It was the sweet saint's doing that I followed him here last night. It has revealed all. I recognize Ninetta's description—the gloom, the blackness, the slimy pool. It is here! It is here, the last links are at hand. Matteo's bones are here. I must find them all—every one, and bury them in consecrated ground. And then—and then, Lucio—you shall come here, and Jocko shall come. And Matteo shall be avenged!"

The voice was hoarse with its terrible passion. The begrimed hands were raised upwards, the eyes expressed a wild, but solemn purpose.

In a moment after she was searching again in the water, with a cold, imperturbable face, and as fast as she brought anything to light, she hid it in the bushes, and flung some moss and leaves over it. Her task lasted nearly the whole day, but she seemed to feel no fatigue, but, on the contrary, to be reinforced with additional energy as she proceeded.

Before she ended, she attached a sort of drag-net to her pole, and by means of this brought up, at last, a terrible, sickening sight, the bones of a skeleton, and a ghastly human skull.

Then at last her sternly enforced composure gave way. Guicinto, in Mother Moonshine's clothing, dropped on her knees, the tears pouring down her dark cheeks.

"Oh, my Matteo, I have found you! Oh, my lost Matteo, I have fathomed the terrible mystery of your fate," she cried, clasping the ghastly object to her breast, shuddering and sobbing, every breath seeming to tear her chest in twain.

Then she gathered an armful of tender grass, covered all out of sight, scattering a few flowers over the top, taking up her basket of herbs, and adjusting the wrappings which transformed her into Mother Moonshine, she went slowly and drearily, not needing to affect the old woman's weakness now, for she could scarcely drag her limbs along towards her lodgings.

"I do not think I need send word," muttered she. "I feel sure that Ninetta, in her strange trance, has seen it all. For Matteo is found! Oh, my Matteo!"

(To be continued.)

GENTLE LEONIE.

CHAPTER XXI.

TIME passed, the chateau of the Duke d'Aumale was completed, and Lady Laure Fontenier was hastening the preparations for her bridal. The day was announced, and it lacked but a week to the date, when one morning, as the lady was busy with her attendants in her apartments, Lizette came in to say that a lady wished to speak with her mistress in one of the drawing-rooms below.

"I am very busy, Lizette. Cannot she call again?" said Lady Laure, in reply to the message brought. "Ask her if this afternoon will not suit her as well, as I am about to try on some dresses, and these modistes like not to wait with their work."

"I told her you were very much engaged just now, and it was a chance if she saw you, though you never denied yourself to visitors, if it were possible for you to see them," answered Lizette. "But the lady—for she is a lady, though she is not dressed like a person of rank—only in a black suit, with a widow's bonnet and cap—begged to speak with you, if only for a few moments; and I told her I would come and tell you, my lady, and you could do as you thought best. I pitied her pale face and her gentle voice, and so I have come directly to tell you about her."

"I will go down and see her. She may be someone who is in distress and needs assistance," said Lady Laure. "Then," she added, to the woman that waited with the work—"you can busy yourself about some other garment till I return. I shall not be long away."

And she left the apartment.

When Lady Laure Fontenier entered the drawing-room below, the lady rose from the seat and advanced to meet her.

She put back the heavy crape veil which was drawn over her face, and the features of Madame Moreau were revealed to her gaze.

Lady Laure Fontenier started forward with a glad greeting.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, Madame Moreau," she said. "I am happy to welcome you to my father's chateau. You have just arrived, I

perceive, by the dust of travel which still rests upon your garments. Come with me to my chamber, and remove your bonnet and shawl; and Lizette shall speedily assist you in your toilet again, after you have rested awhile there."

And Lady Laure uttered the words, while she warmly grasped the hand of her visitor in greeting.

"Thank you for your offers of kind hospitality, but I cannot remain sufficiently long to partake of them now. I have another visit to pay, after I leave you, before I return to my home. I came direct to you, the reason for which you will know, after I have related to you the story of my life. You will listen with believing ears, I know, for the tale will bring its own truth with it. Can you hear it now, my lovely young friend, for it has a relation of importance bearing upon your future life, and should not be delayed in the telling?"

Madame Moreau awaited the reply of Lady Laure.

"I am ready, but you are fatigued. Had you not better rest previous to relating it to me?" she asked anxiously.

"No, no. I have no time now to lose in performing my duty to you, to the Duke d'Aumale, myself, son, and one other," said Madame Moreau. "What I have to say had best not be delayed longer. Therefore I will begin at once, by telling you that I am the true and lawfully wedded wife of the Duke d'Aumale—that I am Lady Leonie Moreau, who became the Duchess d'Aumale by her marriage with the duke, some twenty-five years ago. I perceive that you start, and gaze upon me in amazement, as if you could not credit the story; but it is true, and I have the certificate of the marriage contract with me—it is here."

And Madame Moreau—or rather the Duchess d'Aumale—took a paper from her bosom, which she unfolded and held up, that Lady Laure might read the evidence to her right of duchess.

"It is true, I see! 'Tis written plainly enough," cried the astonished and trembling young lady. "Go on with your tale."

And the duchess proceeded:

"I was wedded to the duke at the time you see stated here. We lived in Paris, in his chateau, and were very happy during the first year of our married life. Then the duke became suddenly jealous of me, as he came in one day and beheld an affectionate parting between my cousin, Louis Dagobert, and myself. My cousin occupied the place of private secretary to the duke. He had held the place for six months when we were married. My husband did not know his secretary was my cousin, for the reason that, when I went to the chateau and discovered him, he entreated me to remain silent, and not betray his real name to the duke, and this was the reason that he did not wish it known. Some time previously, his father had married a second wife, my cousin's mother having died in his childhood. This step-mother proved to be both cruel and treacherous to the two children of her new spouse. She treated them with the utmost severity and cruelty in their childhood, so that when Louis Moreau (for that was his real name) became seventeen years of age, he secretly left that home, resolved never to return till his majority was attained. He came to Paris; and, after a twelvemonth passed in various employments, became my husband's secretary under the assumed name of Louis Dagobert. I recollected his face, for I had seen him once in his boyhood's home on a brief visit there three years before, and when I met him here was about to cry out with surprise, had he not motioned me to silence. When I next met my cousin, which was at an early opportunity, he explained his position, and desired that his secret might be kept from the duke, lest he should be remanded back to his father's control, or, rather, that of his hated step-mother, whose will was law with the weak, vacillating spouse, and who had designs of her own to work out—namely, to drive Louis into the cloister, and thus secure the Moreau title and estates for her own son by this marriage. I gave the promise he required, which was the cause of all my after trouble," and the narrator paused a moment in agitation.

But she resumed.

"One day Louis came to me in great excitement. His sister Helene, who alone knew the secret of his retreat, wrote to him from Florence, whither she had been taken by the family physician in hopes of restoring her failing health. Would he not come to her? By a singular coincidence, the daily list of arrivals at the Paris hotels chronicled the name of his step-mother, who would be likely to pay us a visit. Had not the message come from his sister, he would have left us till she was gone, but now duty urged him away. Hasty preparations were made, and he departed. My husband coming in, and witnessing our cousin's separation, not being aware of the relationship between us, became angry and jealous. But still he treated me kindly. By-and-bye my son

was born; then the duke was very tender, and became almost like his old self, and I was beginning to be happy again, when one day he came in with an open letter in his hand. The letter was from cousin Louis, and worded in such a manner as could give my husband no clue to our relationship; thus he fully believed there was a guilty bond between us.

"He left me with such a cold, stern gaze in his eyes as froze the blood in my veins. He thrust the letter into the fire, and watched it consume away; then, with that look in his eyes upon me, he went from my room, and, that night, I took my infant and fled from his chateau. You have seen me in my home since, Lady Laure, that which I fled to then. My son is the young man whom you have sketched with, Leone Moreau; and my cousin, Louis Moreau, has returned to us in time to prevent your marriage with the husband of another, my young friend, Lady Fontenier," said the Duchess d'Aumale. "Are you glad, or sorry, that this is so, for I would not give grief to your young heart willingly?" she asked earnestly.

"Oh, my benefactress, my saviour, my dearest Duchess d'Aumale, I am happy! Your words have taken a heavy load from my life!" cried Lady Laure Fontenier, with delighted accents.

"Then I am happy, too, but I could not have been, had I known that I caused your gentle heart pain. But I have not finished my story, nor told how my cousin was detained so long away by the perfidy of his step-mother, who came upon him and his sister suddenly in Florence. She caused him to be sent away to a convent in one of the neighbouring cities, where he was kept immured till within a few months, when the death of this cruel step-mother effected his release. His sister and father had died long since, and he was left alone. Some of my late letters, directed to Florence, he found there on his return. I had promised to write yearly till his return. He found them, and came to me, and I am here to tell you the tale."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE Duke d'Aumale sat in the library of his chateau, upon the same morning that Lady Laure Fontenier received a visit from Madame Moreau. He had been there all the morning, busied with his papers and parchments; and the forenoon had nearly worn away while he was engrossed in this employment. Suddenly he was interrupted by the entrance of a servant, who came to say that a lady wished to speak with his highness.

"Admit her," said the duke; "but I hope her errand will be brief, for I have no leisure to devote to anything but business to-day."

A few moments later, the door opened to admit a lady, tall and slender, closely veiled, and attired in black. Something in the visitor's manner at once impressed the duke that his visitor was a lady. He rose from his seat, and handed her a chair, while he said:

"Madame, will you please be seated before you make known the object of your visit to me."

"I thank you, Duke d'Aumale. I am weary, for I have come far since the sunrise. I will accept your offer." And the lady seated herself in the chair he placed for her.

She sat there in silence a few moments, struggling with the strong tide of emotion which crept over her, when she looked upon the face of her husband again. She was within the same apartment where her cousin, Louis Moreau, used to write for the duke; and this thought, and the presence of her husband, combined to render her speechless for a brief period. But the thick, black veil covered all traces of this emotion from the eyes of the duke. He could not penetrate beneath the folds of heavy crape, and so he sat waiting for his visitor to make the object of her coming known to him. At length she spoke:

"Duke d'Aumale, you do not recognize in me your wife, Leonie; but I am she, and am come to talk to you of the early days of our marriage. Will you listen to me kindly, while I recur to the past, and show to you that I am your true and innocent wife, and that our marriage, which has never been lawfully annulled, will prevent you from taking Lady Laure Fontenier as a bride?"

The Duke d'Aumale started up with a crimson spot of anger and indignation upon each cheek. He spoke, and his tones were harsh, and, had not his wife, who sat before him, brought with her the proofs of her innocence, she might well have trembled at his rising wrath. But she felt that she was only doing justice to the lives of all whom she sought to right; so she sat there very pale, for she had now raised her veil, and her features were visible to the excited nobleman.

"You need not come to me, bold guilty woman, with the story upon your lips which was there twenty years ago! You would now like to snatch my young

bride from me, just when the time is approaching for our nuptials; but this cannot be. I understand your plot too well; 'tis that Lady Laure Fontenier shall marry your son, the child of your shame, the mark which branded you, and led me to become more fully aware of my own dishonour. No, no, woman! this can never be. You will never succeed in this, and so your coming to me will be in vain," exclaimed the nobleman, in a voice hoarse with mingled feelings of aroused passion and anger.

But the slender figure rose from the chair, and came and stood before him. She looked calmly and unflinchingly into the wrathful eyes of the duke, and, laying her hand softly upon his arm, said, with a voice of touching pathos:

"Duke d'Aumale, the loved husband of my youth, listen to me calmly, and then judge if I am the guilty thing you imagine. You have wronged me, you have done evil to yourself, to my child, to Louis Dagobert, and Lady Laure Fontenier, by the one sad error of your life. I can prove this all to you. Will you believe, if I cause you to see your mistake so that you cannot doubt longer?"

"It cannot be! Oh, Leonie, it cannot be! I had the proofs of your wrong so plainly, that I cannot now believe another story. But would to heaven it could be proved to me that you were innocent! Would that I could credit it, so that no doubts would arise to darken the future! Then my life would be more happy than it is now, even with the prospect of a speedy union with the lovely and youthful Lady Laure Fontenier; for, oh, Leonie, my once dear wife, your image was above all others in my heart. 'Twas the first, the purest, most worshipped creature that ever dwelt within the soul of any devotee to woman. But, alas! that was years ago when we were both young, and I was weak enough to believe you cared for me above all else on earth. But when I beheld the tender parting between you and Louis Dagobert, I began to waken from my pleasant dream; and then, afterwards, when I came into possession of that letter, the proof was sufficient, I could not doubt longer. My wife, my worshipped one, was untrue to me. I could not trust her again. My life received a blow from which it has never recovered."

"But hear my story, Duke d'Aumale, and then credit it if you will. I ask not to be taken back to your heart or your chateau, only that the marriage which you are about to make be stayed; for it would be sin to go on with it," said the lady, as she stood now beside the chair of the nobleman. "I am at liberty now to tell you that your secretary, Louis Dagobert—or Louis Moreau as his real name is—and myself are cousins. I did not know of his position as secretary to your highness till I beheld him here, in this room, the day following our marriage, when you brought me in to look at your library, as we were viewing the house together. I had seen him once before, only a few years previous; I immediately recognized in the young man whom you introduced as Louis Dagobert my young cousin, Louis Moreau. When I was about to express my astonishment and pleasure at this unexpected meeting, he signalled me to silence; and, as you chanced to be looking away just then, our recognition was not observed by you. After this, when we met alone, Louis told me that he had fled from his home, because his step-mother was unkind, and wished him to enter a monastery and become a priest. He could not submit to the restraints of this secluded life; so he ran away and sought employment. After a time, he came hither to Paris, and found you without a secretary. You employed him because you thought him a young man of good principles, and trustworthy. You met him first, as you and he both told me, in the transept of one of the churches. You were coming out with the Marquis Vostrelle, and chanced to be inquiring of him if he could send you a trustworthy secretary. But the nobleman did not know of any. After you and he had separated, Louis followed you to the pavement, and stated that he had overheard your expressed wish, and earnestly desired that you would take him into your service. He brought no recommendations, he said, except the desire to obtain an honest livelihood; but he would try to please you. Struck by his frank, truthful face, you felt that the youth could be trusted, and bade him follow you to the chateau. At the expiration of a month's trial, you gave him your utmost confidence, and never had cause to doubt his capacity for your service. Do I not state the facts correctly, my lord duke?" she asked.

The nobleman nodded; and again Madame Moreau—or the Duchess d'Aumale, as she should now be called—related the same story she had already imparted to the Lady Laure Fontenier, omitting no particulars.

"And now, after so many long years' incarceration in the Jesuit monastery, wherein Louis's malignant step-mother's brother held rule as *pape*, her death, and the death of her only son, has set him free. He has

returned to prove that a pure cousinly regard was the only tie that ever existed between us. Will you now believe the innocence of your wife, Leonie?" she asked.

"Heaven is my witness that I believe you have been most cruelly wronged by me—wronged too deeply for me to obtain forgiveness!" said the duke, in a tone of the deepest remorse and contrition, bowing over the thin white hand he held; "and yet I ask your mercy, and, if Louis were here, I would prostrate my cold haughty spirit also before him."

"He is here, Duke d'Aumale," uttered a deep voice beside the reunited nobleman and his wife.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SOME six weeks after the events of our last chapter, there was an impressive bridal ceremony in the chateau of Count Fontenier. A beautiful, smiling bride came down into the decorated apartments, leaning upon the arm of a young, handsome, and elegant-looking young man. The bride was Lady Laure Fontenier; but the bridegroom had been changed from the father to the son, the arist youth of the little village of Troyes, Leone Moreau.

Now the young nobleman looked as if he had found his right place. His manners were as courteous and polished as any of the distinguished guests present. He seemed the fitting representative of his father, the Duke d'Aumale, and his still lovely wife, the slender, fair-featured Duchess d'Aumale, Leonie, wife of his youth, and now the bride of his old age, returned to him at the moment when he was about to fill her long vacant place by taking another to his home.

But upon this morning, when all the guests looked on with more than usual interest, the rites of the marriage proceeded, and soon the young couple were made one. Then Count Fontenier went up and kissed his daughter, with happiness in his heart which had never been there when he used to look upon the pale, expressionless face she wore when preparing for the wedding with the old Duke d'Aumale.

"It is surely best as it is, that my child should wed the handsome young son instead of the father," he said, with delight. "I perceive that their hearts are united as firmly as Lady Amelia's and mine were before our marriage; and it would have been wretchedness and life-long sorrow had our union been sundered."

The Duke d'Aumale and the Duchess Leonie upon his arm came next, and bestowed their blessing upon the noble young pair. There were tears in the eyes of both as they gave to each the caressing congratulation:

"My son and daughter—both children whom I knew not till within a few short blessed weeks—I bid you entrance to my heart now and for evermore. You are one, united in bonds which I pray may never be severed by anything save the parting which comes with death. Take warning by the broken lives of your parents, the long-lost happiness of my beloved Leonie and myself, and never doubt the truth and honour of each other. May heaven bless you both, my noble son, and your fair, young bride, and give to each a long and happy life!"

And the duke ceased, while his eyes filled with tears, and his voice was tremulous with the emotion which pervaded his frame.

The Duchess Leonie, with eyes dimmed, and tones faint and low, spoke a few words:

"My dear ones," she said, "I would only repeat to you the words of my noble husband. Be true and frank with each other. If possible, never have a thought which cannot be shared by the other. Let no doubt or suspicion ever come between you; and, if you live in perfect confidence, then no dark cloud will ever settle over your pathway. Till the end of your allotted period of life, unity and peace will dwell with you. I add my blessing to that of the duke, and pray that happiness may ever be the portion of my dear children."

And the duchess and the duke moved away, that another who stood behind them might speak to their children.

A stranger to most of the company now stepped forward. Lady Laure, and Leone, her husband, welcomed him with pleased eyes and extended hands.

"You have brought to us all this happiness," they said, even before the other spoke. "We thank you for it, and shall pray that your future life may be brighter than it has been in the past."

"My dear young friends, I am happy in seeing your smiling faces, the light of joy and gladness that beams from your eyes. You are both young, and have a long period of years to look forward to. Love and confidence rests between you. Let it never be driven from its abiding place. Let it grow and strengthen as the years pass away, so that, in later life, when the years have fled, and can never be re-

allied, you may look back over an unclouded sky, and not have cause to wish that they might return, that you could recall some acts of your life. I am thankful that heaven permitted me to return in time to prevent the unhappiness which would have followed from any longer delay. A kind Father watched over my path and your lives, and brought me to you in time. Live for Him in future; and, as you trust Him, so trust and have confidence in each other." And Louis Moreau passed on.

Lady Laure's old nurse, Dame Charlotte, now came to speak with the happy pair; and those who were nearest, and saw and heard the old lady's words and manner, could but smile at the gladness of her heart when she looked upon the noble, happy young wedded pair.

"It all comes of your visit to me, you know, my noble young lady!" she said. "It all comes of that visit to your old nurse; and now she has come up to this great city to see you married to the handsomest and noblest young man in the world, even if he wasn't the son of the Duke d'Aumale. But I always told my daughter that you wouldn't marry anybody but him, and that I shouldn't wonder if Madame Moreau and her son turned out to be nobility some day, and I wasn't far from wrong. But I am glad it happened just as it has; it is so nice and grand to find Madame Moreau the wife of your husband's father. It's just like a story or one of the fine pictures the young nobleman used to paint, when he was only Leone Moreau in our little town."

Here the daughter of Dame Charlotte urged her mother away, whispering to her that they were interrupting others who wished to come up; and the two went on, till all the assembled company had greeted the pair.

There was one other, who uttered the pleasurable thoughts to herself at this bridal of Lady Laure and the young nobleman, and this was Lizette, the pretty attendant of the lady, who, from the place of observation which the servants held in an adjoining apartment, witnessed the marriage ceremony.

"Now this is just as I wanted it," she exclaimed to herself. "My lady, I knew, loved this young man; and he worshipped the ground her little feet trod on. They are the most charming couple I ever saw, and the noblest in all Paris. It's almost too good to be true though; for I have been afraid, all the time, that my lady would wed the old duke. But how charming it has all come out! and who would have thought it a month ago, when the old duke used to come to visit her, and Lady Laure was making ready to become his bride? But it has ended like a play. The duke's wife and son restored to him in time to prevent his marrying my lady; and the *frouseau* is used for the handsome young lord instead of his gray-haired father. It is like a play at the *Théâtre Royale*, and delights me more than the prospect of my own wedding with Pietro!" And the sprightly Lizette blushed at the thought of the event not far in the future.

The bridal tour of the happy young couple took in its route the little hamlet where they first met. Here they visited the cottage where Madame Moreau and her son had dwelt, and also the old nurse, Dame Charlotte, and her daughter, who had returned to their quiet home.

In due time they returned to Paris, where they divided their days between the reunited duke and duchess, at their chateau, and the Count Fontenier, who now objected to the parting with his daughter as much as he had desired it hitherto.

Louis Dagobert—or Louis Moreau, as he should now be called—soon came into full possession of the patrimonial estates for which his step-mother had intrigued, and effected his banishment to the Italian monastery.

Selecting Paris as his home, his lost youth returned to him in a measure, and he was happy in becoming the friend and almoner of the deserving poor, and became known and loved by all classes of society.

But his greatest joy consisted in witnessing the happiness of the reunited Duke d'Aumale and his restored wife Leonie, and the wedded bliss of the lady Laure and her quondam artist-lover.

THE END.

EFFECT OF FROST ON LARVÆ.—In a paper addressed to the French Academy, M. Reiser announces that the general belief held by farmers, that a severe frost kills noxious insects and larvae that grub in the earth, is a fallacy, the only effect of the frost being to drive them still deeper into the earth. He found that while the thermometer stood at 5 deg. Fah., and the ground was covered with snow, the soil at a depth of twenty inches was not influenced by frost, and below this line the larvae were to be found; descending still farther as the cold increases.

MICHELDEVER.

CHAPTER XVIII.

At nine o'clock Mrs. Courtney came in to speak a few more parting words to her guest, and to take Claire away with her. Thorne had laboured to impress on the latter the necessity of repressing all outward sign of emotion, when she bade her protectress good-night, but when they stood together at the door of Mrs. Courtney's chamber, the poor child threw her arms around her, and returned her good-night kiss with such fervour that her friend laughingly said:

"One might suppose it was I you were about to part from, Claire, in place of your lover. There, my dear, go to your room, and try and compose yourself. I will send Nancy to you with a sedative which you must drink like a good girl."

Claire feebly murmured her thanks, and hastened to her own room to struggle with the emotions which, at this last moment, threatened to overwhelm her powers of self-command.

In a few moments, the servant came with some aromatic drops, which she accepted, but took very good care not to taste. When the house was quiet, and all seemed buried in profound repose, she stole into a small room opening from Mrs. Courtney's, in which Julia slept. The little girl was in the sound sleep of childhood, and she did not even stir when Claire wept over and kissed her, wondering where and how they should meet again.

She then fitted back to her own apartment, completed her preparations for departure, and sat beside her window, awaiting the signal that had been agreed upon between herself and Thorne.

The room was on the second floor, with windows opening to the floor of the long terrace in the rear of the house; from this, a flight of steps led to the lower portion, and it was easy enough to effect her escape without danger of detection.

Claire heard the hours strike upon the large clock in the hall, and when two rung out, it was followed by a slight scraping sound upon her door. She started up, unclosed it, and Thorne came noiselessly in, softly closing the door behind him.

"It is time," he whispered. "The moon is rising, and we can be far away before your absence is suspected. I have been down to see the carriage, and everything is quite ready."

"And I too am ready," was the reply, but her voice slightly quivered, and she cast a regretful glance around the secure shelter she was leaving for—she knew not what.

He advanced to the window, unclosed the shutters, and together they slipped out, made their way noiselessly to the lower floor, and passed towards the steps.

Old Carlo lay upon a mat near the door, but he only raised his head, uttered a feeble whine of recognition, and permitted them to go on without any further demonstration.

When they had crossed the yard, Thorne carrying her carpet-bag in his hand, Claire ventured to whisper:

"I forgot old Carlo. If he had barked, mamma would have been sure to look out to see what was the matter."

"I took good care of that," he carelessly replied. "I remembered the danger from him, and I gave him a sedative, more potent than the one I met Nancy taking in to you."

"Oh, Walter! I hope you gave the poor old fellow nothing that could hurt him," gasped Claire.

"Pooh, child! what was I to do? There was no alternative, for I would not permit the life of so insignificant a creature to stand in the way of our successful departure. He will not suffer long, and he will only be helped on to dog's paradise a little sooner than he must have gone at any rate."

Claire felt as if a sudden blow had been dealt her, and she uttered a little cry.

"Are you mad?" asked Thorne, almost fiercely. "that you risk such an outcry as that while we are so near the house? What have I done that you should act in such a manner?"

"You have wounded my heart, that is all," she faintly replied. "The dog was fond of you, and I have often seen you pet him. Do you always rid yourself of what is in your way, in this summary manner, Walter?"

"Claire. If a man does not put impediments out of his way, how is he to get on in life? Things that are of no consequence, I thrust aside with very little remorse. As to old Carlo, I think I have done him a service, by giving him a ticket of leave from this lower world, in which he was getting to be a nuisance."

"But I thought you were attached to him, Walter. I could not strike a deadly blow at the life of any creature I love."

"Perhaps not; but you are a woman; men are different, you see, and you must make allowances. It was a choice between getting safely off with you, or leaving Carlo the power to give the alarm. Of course I could not hesitate."

It arose to the lips of Claire to say that humanity was of both sexes, but she repressed the words with a faint shiver, and Thorne, who had made her take his arm, asked:

"Are you cold, my darling? I hope you have not come away without wrapping a shawl around you."

"No—I am not cold, and I am sufficiently wrapped up. I am only trembling at the thought of what will be felt by mamma to-morrow, when our flight is discovered. Walter, I have given up everything for you, and—and—I begin to fear that I may become one of those impediments upon your path of which you spoke just now."

Thorne stopped and looked down into the pale face on which the moon was shining, and he earnestly said:

"How can you imagine such a thing as that, Claire? It seems like sacrilege to utter such a suggestion. Are you not my chosen wife—flesh of my flesh? We are one in the sight of heaven, and in trampling on you, I should be outraging myself. What are all my vows worth, if they have not brought to your heart the conviction that you are the one desire of mine?"

She thrilled with happiness at this assurance, and clung to his arm with a tender pressure that expressed more than words.

"Forgive me, dear love; but I have only you, and I tremble at the mere thought that I may become a burden to you. I am so helpless—so dependent—and I have nothing to give you but my poor little faithful heart."

"I ask for no higher prize, my darling. Do as I do, Claire. Make the most of the passing hour, for that is all that is sure of in this uncertain life. Do not poison 'love's young dream' by the intrusion of a single fear, but accept the bliss the gods provide, and be thankful for it. I do not suffer a care to dim my present, though I might, if I would permit myself to do so."

"Then all is not perfectly serene in his heaven, any more than in mine," thought the poor little runaway, and she clouded her horizon still farther by conjecturing what drawbacks to perfect felicity her companion thrust away from him, that he might enjoy his stolen bliss in its utmost capacity to bless.

She was madly attached to him, but she thought of the long and prosperous future that she believed was opening before them, quite as much as of the present. To be near him—to live in his presence—was not enough for her, delightful as it was. She must have some assurance that this happiness was to continue and increase as the years flowed on, before she could fully realize that it was hers.

They crossed the wide lawn, passed through a skirt of woodland, and gained the lower gate, to find the carriage drawn up on one side of the road, with the driver nodding on his seat.

Before the man was fully aroused, Thorne had placed Claire in the vehicle, and was preparing to enter it himself.

The driver drowsily said:

"Is that you, Mr. Thorne? I've waited so long that I believe I was almost asleep."

"There can be but one opinion about that, John. There—I'll shut the door myself; drive on, and get to S— as soon as possible. I wish to be in time to catch the morning train."

"Very well, sir. By five o'clock I'll set you down at the station."

"All right then; go on as fast as you can."

"I wonder what he's in such a hurry for, and what's taking him off in this here mysterious way?—but 'tain't none of my business," soliloquized the driver; and with this philosophical conclusion, he whipped up his horses, and was soon winding through the steep road which had been out through the mountain ridge that enclosed the valley.

The egress was on the opposite side from that on which Thorne had made his abrupt and dangerous entrance into it, and as they emerged on the tableland above, the first rosy gleam of day was visible. The stars faded out, one by one—the moon paled before the royal ruler of the day, as he arose amid the pomp of golden and purple clouds.

Claire shed a few bitter tears as she was borne from the scene she had known, and loved from her birth, but they were wiped away by her lover, and her emotion soothed by the tenderest assurances of eternal devotion.

She believed them, for she had unbounded faith in him, and after the decisive step she had taken, nothing was left for her, but to trust in the promises he so profusely lavished.

This was given as unreservedly as Thorne could have wished, and by the time they reached the little village to which they were bound, Claire had almost forgotten her regrets at forsaking the friends of her life to go with him.

They drew up at the door of the station, and the driver was struck with astonishment when he saw a lady handed from the carriage. He uttered a loud whistle, and exclaimed under his breath:

"Well, by Jingo! this beats all! It's the old Frenchman's girl, and she's gone off with that fellow. I might have known, when I was told to wait in that hollow, that some mischief was afoot. But it's none of my business—as she bakes, she must brew; as my old mammy used to say; but it's a sorry drink she's getting ready for herself, or I'm no conjuror."

Thorne ordered breakfast. He was in the gayest of spirits, and Claire, obedient to his impulse, brightened up, in spite of her sleepless night, and they passed a pleasant hour before the train sounded beneath the window. In a few more moments they were whirling rapidly away, and the young fugitive was borne onward to the sad destiny she had so recklessly embraced.

CHAPTER XIX.

In the morning the first thing that happened at the Grange was the discovery of Carlo lying dead upon the mat on which he usually slept. Nancy found him thus when she came in to her morning duties, and she presently hastened to her mistress to report what had happened. With staring eyes she stood beside Mrs. Courtney's bed, and said:

"I declare, miss, that somebody's been in the yard that oughtn't to have been, and they've poisoned that good old Claude, because he'd have barked and woke you up."

Mrs. Courtney sat up, and looked at her in some alarm.

"Has anything been disturbed?" she asked. "Have you been through the house to see in what condition it is?"

"Yes, ma'am, I've been through every place, except Miss Claire's room, and that was locked. I knocked at the door, but she never heard me, and so I came to you. But nothing has been taken, as far as I can see, and if it was a robber, he only wanted something he found outside the house. Mr. Thorne's gone, but of course it wasn't him that was prowling about, and killed our dog."

With trembling hands Mrs. Courtney hastened to make her toilette, and then went out to ascertain for herself the state of affairs. Carlo was quite dead, so she ordered him to be removed and interred. After a hurried survey of the house she called to Claire to open her door, but when all remained silent in her room, with a quickly beating heart she moved towards the lower end of the hall, and unlocked a door that opened on the back terrace.

On stepping out, a single glance showed her that the shutter nearest to her was imperfectly closed, and even before she entered the vacant room Mrs. Courtney felt certain of what had happened.

On the toilette table lay the letter left for her by the fugitive, and she read it with mingled emotions of compassion and anger—compassion for the misguided girl, and anger for the duplicity of which she had been guilty towards herself. At that moment she was not disposed to extenuate Claire's fault, for she felt her ingratitude too deeply. She had placed her in the position of a daughter, and trusted her as such, and this was her return for all the kindness lavished upon her.

"I wonder if she poisoned my poor old dog?" she thought. "It would only be in keeping with the rest. Yet no—I wrong the poor child—badly as she has acted, she could not have done that. Another and a more ruthless hand gave Carlo his fate, and Claire, in her turn, will find the same iron grasp crushing her to the earth. Unhappy child! this reckless, selfish man will work her woe yet, I sadly fear, for she has no one to stand between him and herself, and demand justice for her. If he marries her, all may be well, but who knows if he will do that? Oh! Claire—Claire, why have you deserted the only friend who could have averted from you the evils into which you have so recklessly plunged."

She folded the letter, and slowly sought the lower part of the house. When it became known among the household that Claire was missing, the mystery of Carlo's fate was solved, though few among them believed that she had destroyed the old dog, who had been the companion of so many of her rambles in the days of her childhood.

"It was he who did it," was muttered among the servants.

And Nancy said:

"Though he may think a poor dog of no account, it were a bad start to make with Miss Claire. Is'pose

he's a-going to marry her and come back here to live; but 'twon't be no use; I don't believe much would come of it."

When Julia learned the flight of her playfellow, she wept and implored her mother to send after her darling Rosebud, and bring her back in spite of Mr. Thorne's opposition. She wailed:

"My Claire will be sorry and come back, mother, whether he wants her or not. It was wicked of Mr. Thorne to take our Rosebud away from us—and what will my brother say?"

"He can say nothing more than I do—that Claire has chosen her own lot and we have no farther concern with her affairs. Do not speak of her to me again, Julia, for I can never hear her name without pain. She has wounded my heart so deeply that I hardly think I can ever forgive her."

Yet in spite of her resentment, Mrs. Courtney would have sent a messenger on the track of the fugitives, authorized to see them married, had there been any one near her who could have been despatched on such an errand. But there was not—her son was far away, and if Andrew had been at the Grange, she would scarcely have considered it safe to send him in pursuit of the man who had robbed him of the object of his boyish preference. His temper was violent, his feelings ardent; and she understood better than anyone else how deep a blow the knowledge of Claire's elopement would be to him, young as he was.

She could only fold her hands and sigh as she thought over the fate her childlike *protégée* had so recklessly embraced, and all anger died out of her womanly heart, as she foreboded the disastrous consequences that might result to Claire from the event of the past night.

When the scarcely tasted breakfast was over, Mrs. Courtney went, as was her usual custom, to inquire how Jerome had passed the night. She found him a little better, and this morning he seemed able to speak quite rationally.

He noted the unusual cloud upon her brow, and asked:

"What is it, my daughter, that troubles you? Let me lift the burden from your heart, and offer such consolation as I have often given you in past days."

"If I thought you could bear the revelation I have to make I would not hesitate; but I fear that the cause of my sadness would too deeply affect you."

He gently replied:

"Christ bore the burden of our sins, and I, His humble representative on earth, must not shrink from my share. I am stronger than you think. I feel much better this morning, and my brain is clear enough to advise you. Tell me, my daughter, the cause of your trouble, that I may offer such balm as religion only can afford."

Thus urged, Mrs. Courtney briefly informed him of Claire's elopement, and read to him the letter she had left. He pressed his hand upon his brow, and after a few moments of wandering thought, brought to his memory the events of the day on which he had been seized with illness. He said:

"It is right that Claire should go with her husband, though why she has gone off in this clandestine manner I am unable to understand. She told you of course of what took place in my cottage on that day before I fainted."

"She told me nothing. Her course throughout has been one of deceit. To what do you refer? Surely—surely you did not lend yourself to the service of these young people, and then conceal it from me? But, pardon me, I forget that you have not been in a condition to speak of this since that day."

"No," was the faint reply. "I have been lying as one in a trance since that day; but they came to me, assuring me of the consent to their union given by M. Lapierre before his death, and I was weak enough to believe that I was serving the good cause by uniting them. I was gaining a son to the church, for Mr. Thorne made his marriage a condition of becoming one of us. I thought any means justifiable to save a human soul, and Claire will keep him in the path that leads to salvation."

Mrs. Courtney listened with surprise and chagrin to this explanation; but it relieved her of her darkest fear on Claire's account. She quickly asked:

"Will the marriage stand any scrutiny? Should Mr. Thorne find it convenient to repudiate it, will not Claire be able to prove its validity? There could have been no licence, and no witnesses were present."

The sick man proudly replied:

"The service of the church will suffice to a true believer, and I think Mr. Thorne was sincere in his profession of our faith. He will not dare to cast off the wife wedded to him with all the forms. The ceremony is binding, even without such legal securities as men have invented. 'Whom God hath

joined together, let no man put asunder.' Is not that sufficient? You, at least, should believe it, my daughter."

"I do; but if this young man should prove recreant to the vows he has taken, what redress would this young girl have? Should you not recover, she may be placed in a most wretched and helpless position."

"Why should you imagine such a possibility? Mr. Thorne seemed an earnest and true man, and he was madly in love with Claire."

"I think the last myself, but such passions are apt to exhaust themselves quickly, and he may soon tire of her. I feel assured, now, that he has deceived us as to the consent given to his marriage by his father. If his statements had been true, or if he had intended to act honourably by Claire, he would not have concealed their union from me, when I no longer possessed the power to prevent it. Nor would he have exacted from his wife that she should not refer to it in her letter to me. Did you not remark that she speaks of becoming his wife: she does not state that she is already such."

"But, my friend, that is unfair to the young man. He showed me letters which proved the truth of all his statements, and I am unwilling to attribute to him such turpitude as you hint at. Claire has no fortune, but she is of good family, and quite his equal in other respects. Why, then, should you doubt his honourable intentions?"

"I may be wrong to do so, and I will hope for the best; compose yourself, Jerome, for you are becoming too much excited. When you are stronger, I will get you to give me a written certificate, that the ceremony of marriage was performed by you, and that may help to keep Mr. Thorne true to his pledges."

"I will give it to you now. Let me be propped up, and writing materials placed before me. I will at least perform this act of justice before I die."

The young brother was summoned from the next room, where he was resting from his night watch by his friend, and Mrs. Courtney went in search of what was required.

She soon returned, but in that brief interval a sudden reaction had taken place, and Jerome lay pale and nearly insensible upon his pillows. Every effort was made to restore him, but he sank from that moment, and never rallied before his death, which took place a few days later.

CHAPTER XX.

It was much to Mrs. Courtney to know that Claire had not abandoned her protection, till a husband possessed the right to command her to follow him, but she bitterly regretted that a proof of the marriage in some tangible form had not come into her possession.

A vague dread that Thorne intended to act unfairly by his mysteriously wedded bride would remain in her mind, and she watched and waited for some communication from the fugitive, with a solicitude that could scarcely have been greater had Claire been her own daughter.

A boy was sent regularly to the post-office several miles distant for letters, but four weeks rolled by before one came. Mrs. Courtney eagerly tore open the envelope, and read the following lines from Claire:—

"ST. LEONARD'S, October 15th, 18—.

"DEAR, DEAREST MAMMA,—I should have written to you before, but Walter would not permit me to betray the place of our temporary residence, till we were on the eve of leaving it. He is the dearest and most devoted of husbands, but he is a little imperious in his manner, and you know it is my duty to obey him. It is also my pleasure to do so, for he is all the world to me."

"How complete is his power over me you may be able to comprehend when it induced me to abandon you and my darling Julia, to go out with him into that world of which I was so ignorant. Pardon that desertion, dear mamma, and believe that my heart was saddened by remorse for the part I was compelled to play."

"When I have your forgiveness, I shall regret nothing in the past, for I have gained everything by conforming to the will of my husband. He devotes himself to me—he loads me with beautiful presents, and shows me everything that can interest or improve me; and his refusal to permit me to write to you before this, was occasioned by his fear that you might send some one in pursuit of us, to intrude on the charming seclusion of our honeymoon."

"We came directly to this town, and took lodgings with a widow lady, who has a lovely home embowered in trees and foliage. Her family consists of herself and two young children, and she was glad to give up two of the best rooms in her house for the liberal price offered by Walter."

"We were at the hotel but two days, and we lived



[CLAIRE'S FIRST DOUBT.]

there very privately till my husband found this charming nest of bloom and verdure.

"There is nothing to remind me of the wild mountain glen in which I have passed my life, but there is much to charm and delight me. There is an old brick church on a neighbouring hill, and the grass-grown yard is filled with the graves of those who have long since passed away. I went there once, but Walter thinks it too gloomy a place to visit a second time, and our rambles are taken in another direction.

"Such long and charming walks as we enjoy! how my heart swells with thankful joy as I lean upon his arm and listen to his dear voice, discoursing with that eloquence with which even you have been charmed.

"Colonel Thorne wishes him to enter political life, and if he does, I am sure he will soon be known as one of the finest orators in the land. Think how proud I am that this gifted, noble being has chosen me, insignificant as I am, as the companion of his life, the sharer of his future greatness. What can I offer him in return but the entire devotion of my life?

"I would make any sacrifice to prove my devotion to him; yet why should I speak of sacrifices, when Walter asks none—would accept of none from the being he wishes to screen from every sorrow, from every danger. If you could witness his tender care for me, you would be satisfied that my happiness is safe in his keeping, and you would admit that I have done well to trust my future in his gentle hands.

"Dear mamma, think kindly of Walter, though he did steal your adopted child from you. Remember that it was to crown her with perfect bliss that he was guilty of that treachery, and pardon him for the sake of the little wife he seems so proud of. Yes—I am happy; there will not be a cloud on my horizon, when I am assured of your forgiveness; so hasten to send it to me as soon as you receive this.

"Walter has been reading to me the history of the times that 'tried the souls' of all good patriots. He finds my mind full of poetry and nonsense, and he is endeavouring to lay a foundation for something more solid.

"He paints a little, too, for he is taking another portrait of me; I think he must have idealized my head a little, for I cannot be so lovely as the creature that glows upon his canvas. Walter scouts that suggestion though, and insists that he has made a failure; that he can never transfer to his picture the animation of my mobile face. I hope you will see it some day, and judge which of us is right.

"Our honeymoon is nearly over, alas! but if fate should maliciously deny me the perfect happiness I anticipate in the days to come, I shall at least be able to look back upon these precious weeks as a golden reflection from heaven. Walter has even made me, at times, forget that such a cloud as your displeasure lingers on my horizon. Lift that from my heart, beloved mamma, and I shall go on my way serene as the sunshine that falls around me on this lovely morning.

"I half sigh, however, when I think how soon we must leave this fairy spot, which will always be enchanted ground to me, as the scene of our first wedded experience. Yet I am glad to go to my future home—to behold all the fine and beautiful things of which I am to be the mistress.

"Thornhill is a magnificent residence, Walter tells me, and the old gentleman is impatient to have a youthful mistress established over it. I do not know how I shall bear myself in those unaccustomed scenes, but I am trying to assume the dignity of a matron, before I am introduced to my father-in-law. I rather dread the ordeal, for Walter admits that Colonel Thorne is a man of odd temper, and sometimes difficult to please. He is good enough to say, though, that he has no doubt I shall win my way to his favour, as readily as I have to his own heart. I am afraid that Walter asserts this only to keep up my courage, but I shall do my best, and make every effort to please the old gentleman for his son's dear sake.

"By the time this reaches you we shall be on our way to L—, and your reply must be sent to me there, under cover to Walter. Dear mamma, I entreat that you will write at once, and gladden my heart by a full and free pardon for all the uneasiness I have made you suffer on my account.

"I hope by this time that Mr. Jerome is quite restored, as he seemed to be improving before I left. Kiss Julia for me a score of times, and remember me to all the servants.

"Walter will add a few lines to this long epistle, and I leave him to say all that he wishes for himself. Your grateful and attached,

CLAIRE ROSE LAPIERRE THORNE.

"P.S.—I sign my name in full, because it is the first time I have had occasion to write it, and I wished to see how it would look."

In a dashing, free hand Thorne had added these lines:

"My dear Mrs. Courtney, I flatter myself that you will forgive me for stealing your pet from you, when you learn how happy she is, in the new life to which I have introduced her.

"We have enjoyed a brief interlude of Eden's blessedness, which I shall always gratefully remember; but all things must come to an end, and life's duties will no longer permit me to dally longer in this Armida's bower. I have made a sketch of the exquisite cottage home in which we have passed the last four weeks, and I have had it framed to be forwarded to you as a peace offering.

"You will detect a figure robed in white, standing in the sunshine that glints through the trees, and you will have no difficulty in identifying it as the darling of both our hearts.

"It is necessary for us to leave this place in a few more days, for my father is becoming impatient at my long absence, and I must hasten to make my peace with him, by presenting to him the gem of which I robbed you. Pardon me for making such a return for your hospitality, but the temptation was irresistible, and you were so immovable that no other alternative was left me.

"It will be best for Claire's letters to come, for a season, under cover to me. I cannot explain why at present, but you shall soon know my reasons, and also how your protégés prosper in her new sphere.

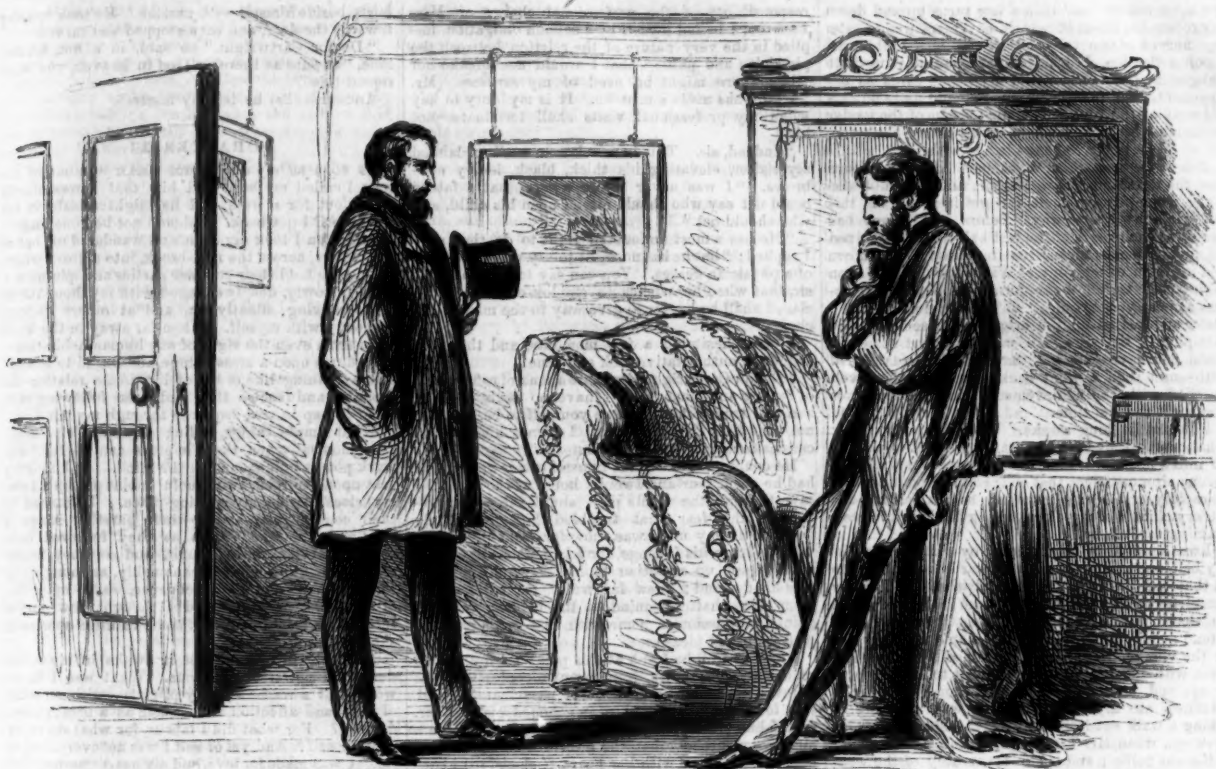
"With the highest sentiments of esteem, I am yours respectfully,

W. THORNE.

Mrs. Courtney read these letters over twice, and pondered long upon the last. She remarked with a feeling of discontent that he never referred to Claire as his wife, though she called him her husband, and doubtless believed herself as securely wedded to him as if a dozen witnesses had been present at their espousals. She accused herself of becoming suspicious, but she admitted that there was cause to doubt the fairness of his proceedings, since he was unwilling to permit Claire's letters to be sent openly to her under her new name.

If Thorne's assertions respecting his father were true, why was this precaution necessary? She reluctantly came to the conclusion that a battle would have to be fought between the father and the son, before the young wife could be received in the paternal home. That Claire was perfectly unsuspecting of the deception he had practised, was evident from the tenour of her letter; and judging Walter Thorne from that fact alone, so high-toned a woman as Mrs. Courtney could arrive at but one conclusion—that the agreeable man of the world had few scruples, where a question of self-gratification was involved, and she regretted more bitterly than ever that Claire had taken so false a step at the commencement of her life.

(To be continued.)



[FITZROY'S UNPLEASANT ERRAND.]

CORDELIA'S FORTUNE.

CHAPTER X.

I WAS not used to opening other people's letters for the purpose of reading them, and I suppose I took a great deal more precaution than was necessary on the occasion. I not only took another look at the curtains, to be sure that they were drawn entirely over the windows, but I went to the door to assure myself that the bolt had not slipped back of its own accord since I turned the key. At length I felt secure, sat down on the table, and drew the lamp close up to my elbow, after which I opened the folded sheet. It was clumsily, but plainly, written, and read as follows—spelling, capitals, and all:

"ON THE ROAD NORTH, June —th, 18—.

"MR. MULLEN—Dear Sir,—You must make it your present aim to hush matters Consarnin Mi Deer Sister. Tel Hur Tu kepe everything quiet. The police Wil not Trubbel Hur. Hur Brothers have tracked You, but think sure you Went on above there. They Wil Look out for that Doctor, Fur Hee Hes Gut Munny and Kan Pal. As soon as our Meddick man Thinkes Shee is out of danger Tomas Wil Lett Yu Kno, and you had better drop him a lettur. Kuzin Bil Warns Yu Tu Give him your—Cos Hees Loost Hizin, and you will make Hym Happi. Timethy Rites us Thet Thee Munny Kome safe. We shall not Touch Plantin Untill Yu Kum. the Bank Wunt Diskount Your Noat. Tel Susin Tu Kepe Stil untill this thing is Blown over. Mind that Doctor Doant Runn Awa Withoute Payin. Be thinkin of a wa to Put Thim Oxin Tu Work. Ef Thet Ould Wite Hoss Doant Git Enny Bettur Berry him Under the Sod. We shall have a Big Thing Frum the West Feeld. Be Shure and Hev the Moing Mashen on hand by the first of July. Let the Teems Keep Still till then. As soon as the last Work is Dun We Shal Leve. Thim Oxin Ken haul Butifullly. Bos Ses Es Sune Es the Guds is Sold each Man Shall have his Share as Helpid Mak Thim. There is nearly Six thousand pounds With No Farmin Tules to Be Sould."

"VITTERSON."

"P. S.—If you think Martin Nedes Moar Hilp, Git it. Yu can back down the Grate Cart, and blow Es Mutch Es Yu Pless on Wat Beelongs Tu us. A little Pizen Wil Kill thim Ratta. Bi the Wa, Ef Tomas Kant Gut Red of Hes Kold a Leetle Whiskee in his medicine Will be the best thing he Ken have."

Well—what had I fallen upon? I read the letter over two or three times, and I could not make any-

thing of it. The first thing that struck me was, that the hand was disguised; because once in a while a letter would be formed perfectly, and I could detect places where the hand, forgetting its restraint, had indulged in a flourish. Had I picked that letter up in the street, I should have thrown it by, as the work of a country clown who had a curious mixture of trouble and business on his hands; but coming as it did, I was led to give it more consideration. Of course, the missive would not have been brought in the night for a man in Mullen's position, except there was something in it of consequence.

I read it again; and again I reflected. The circumstances under which it had come into my hands—the evident aim of the writer to conceal his individuality—and the time and the occasion—they were taken up in turn, and carefully considered, until I knew that I held a secret cipher in my hand. And now to solve it.

I was pretty good at solving riddles and puzzles. I cannot now call to mind a single one that ever baffled my skill, though some have taxed my patience and ingenuity to the utmost. I spread the letter out upon my table, and read it in every way I could think of. I read it backwards—I left out words—added words—I read it up and down—I turned it, twisted it—and all to no avail. And yet I was satisfied that the effort was a clumsy one. It had evidently been framed in a hurry, and hence the seeming nonsense in several of its parts.

As my clock struck one I folded the letter up and put it away. I disliked to give it up so, but I was weary, and I thought I would take it another time; for now I had a double incentive to the work: I not only wished to know the true meaning of the missive, but I wished to solve the enigma.

I went to bed, but not to sleep. Those pothooks and horribly spelled words haunted me; and the glaring capital letters, joined to unimportant words, danced a hornpipe in my waking vision.

Hold! Those capitals! I had not particularly noticed the arrangement of those characters while I had the letter opened before me; but I could see that there was something peculiar in them now. No sooner had the thought found form in my mind than I was up, and, hunting for my match-safe, I soon had my lamp lighted, and having put on my dressing-gown, I went back into my room and sat down again to my work. As I this time spread the letter open before me it presented a new aspect.

Did you never, dear reader, after you had solved one of these picture puzzles, where the principal object is so made up of lights and shades, and seemingly straggling parts of other objects, that it is not

at first apparent—did you never, after you had once discovered the hidden thing, sit and wonder how it was possible that this did not present itself before? And yet the next man would be sure to be puzzled as you had been; and while he looked in deep perplexity, you would wonder why he did not see it.

And so this puzzle began now to unfold itself to me.

"On the Road North, June —th, 18—."

That was plain and direct, and had a business look.

"You must make it your Present aim to hush matters."

The framing of the words was not the work of a bungler. The spelling of "ame," and the capitalizing of "Present" and "Hush," was a blind. If you will read those few words aloud, and without regard to the rest of the sentence, you will notice their easy and business-like ring; and at that point there comes a horrible jar, and then follows a string of unimportant words, all capitalized and spelled wrongly.

At this place I found light, and I cried "Eureka! the secret's mine." By simply casting out all words which are both wrongly spelled and commenced with capital letters, we have the intelligence the author meant to convey. One or two simple adjuncts, not thus designated, were necessarily cast out with their antecedents. I took a pencil and a sheet of paper, and translated it according to this rule, and the following, with the spelling corrected and the punctuation supplied, is the result I arrived at:

"ON THE ROAD NORTH, June —th, 18—.

"MR. MULLEN—Dear Sir,—You must make it your present aim to hush matters. Keep everything quiet. The police have tracked. Look out for that doctor! As soon as our man is out of danger you had better drop him! Give him your—and you will make us safe! We shall not touch the Bank until this thing is blown over. Mind that doctor. Be thinking of a way to put him under the sod! We shall have a big thing on hand by the first of July. Keep still till then. As soon as the last haul is sold each man shall have his share. There is nearly six thousand pounds."

"VITTERSON."

"P. S.—If you think Martin can back down and blow on us, a little poison in his medicine will be the best thing he can have!"

Well, my dear friends, what do you think of that? For my part, I thought I had been brought into a situation not at all pleasant or desirable. Who was Vitterson? He was a rascal, let him be who he would. After I had made myself perfectly sure that I had solved the true intent of the secret cipher, I

got upon my feet and took a few turns up and down my room, the effect of which movement was to calm my nerves down to a quiet and healthful state. Upon reflection, I decided that I had no immediate danger to fear. I had as many trump cards as my opponents, and in Will Martin I should find a powerful auxiliary; for when I should tell him of the tender regard in which he was held by his friend Vitterson, he would be likely to shake hands with me.

But—who was this Vitterson? I would learn that the next time I saw Martin; and I would also make some arrangement for getting rid of this letter in a legitimate way. Before seeking my bed again, as the events of the last half hour had driven all inclination to sleep from my brain, I sat down and made an exact copy of Vitterson's letter, even taking pains to follow the formation of the characters as nearly as I could. This being done, I took a wafer and sealed up the original—so securing and stamping it, that the man who had first sealed it could not have detected that it had been tampered with—and then I went back to my chamber, well satisfied with the achievement I had gained, since leaving it the last time.

I did not lie long awake. When I tried to think what course I had best pursue, my mind wandered off into a maze of wonder upon the strangely adventurous circumstances that came crowding upon me so rapidly, and in this maze my senses left me, the silvery chimes of my clock, telling the hour of three, tinkling my lullaby.

I was aroused in the morning by a sharp ring at my bell, and as I presently afterwards heard Georgie at the door, I dressed myself, and when I had nearly completed my toilette the boy came in, and informed me that a man wished to see me. It was a call to attend a sick child, and as the man's dwelling was in the village, I took my light medicine case and went with him on foot. I found it to be a case of croup, and having done what I thought proper, I returned, ate my breakfast, and was thinking of taking a walk out into some of the shady, flowery by-ways, when Mr. Fitzroy presented himself.

He was polite; and spoke favourably of the weather, especially of the salubrity of the present morning, to all of which I assented. I offered him a seat; he took it, and his friendliness of remark upon the arrangement of my books—upon the neatness of my instruments—and upon my evident success in my practice, was copious in the extreme. I made but little reply, however, for I knew he had come on business, and I was desirous that he should speak of it at once, as his company was not at all agreeable.

At length I saw, from the change in his countenance, that he was coming at it.

"Doctor," said he, with a look that absolutely made me shudder, so utterly hypocritical was it,—and yet he was fully persuaded in his own mind that he was assuming a most agreeable and condescending look,—“Doctor, I was walking this way, and I thought I would drop in and do a little errand that Mr. Larkton gave into my hands yesterday. I must say, sir, that we are all much pleased with your success in the case of Miss Cordelia. You have proved yourself a master of your profession, and we shall certainly use our endeavours towards the making public of your skill. Indeed, sir, I can, with a free conscience, recommend you.”

Of course I had to bow an acknowledgment; but I fear it was rather a cold one. I thanked him for his good opinion, and remarked that a successful physician could not long remain in the back-ground.

“And yet,” he said, with one of those smiles of his which lost themselves in the deep crow's-feet at the corners of his eyes, “it does no professional man harm to have his successes publicly spoken of.”

Of course I could not deny this proposition, and I did not make the attempt.

The smile came again, this time twisting itself in and out of the lines about his nose, eyes and mouth; and when he spoke his voice was as thin and bodiless as bubbling water:

“Ah—by the way, doctor,—Mr. Larkton desired me to call and obtain your bill.”

“My bill, sir?” I think my voice sounded rather harshly.

“Your bill for professional services, doctor.”

“Really, Mr. Fitzroy, I do not understand you. Has Mr. Larkton seen fit to call in another physician?”

“Bless your soul, no! Do you not comprehend? He considers his child well; and, as you have cured her, he wishes to pay you. He has empowered me, sir, to act as his agent, and if you will just make out a receipt, I will pay it. Mr. Larkton never allows a bill to stand against him after it is due.”

“My dear sir,” I said, very politely, though I think with palpable coolness, “when I assumed the

responsibility of the professional charge of Miss Larkton, I bound myself by a solemn obligation, implied in the very nature of the relation between the physician and patient, that I would not forsake her while there might be need of my services. Mr. Larkton has made a mistake. It is my duty to say when my professional visits shall terminate—not his.”

“Indeed, sir. This is new law to me,” exclaimed my visitor, elevating his thick, black, heavy eyebrows. “I was never before aware that a father could not say who should attend upon his child, and who should not.”

“He has a most undoubted right to do that, sir,” I replied; “but he has no right to say when the need of a physician ceases. You can say to him, my dear sir, that when he wishes to employ another physician, I shall be happy to give way to the man of his choice.”

Fitzroy hesitated a few moments, and then assumed an authoritative look and tone:

“Doctor Cartwright, if you are a man of refinement, of feeling and honour, as I have no doubt you are, and as I trust you will prove yourself to be, you will not visit Miss Larkton again. I do not know how I can make myself better understood.”

He could not have made himself better understood had he spent four-and-twenty hours at the work. I saw through the whole plot, and I fully comprehended the fear that troubled him. The only question in my mind was, how far I should endeavour to spare his feelings, for I had determined that I would pay no attention to his demand. That it was his demand I knew full well. He had operated upon the shattered mind of the banker, and had gained permission to come with this errand to me. And it did not please me.

I may as well be frank at this point as not. The reader already knows, from my own confession, that I loved Cordelia Larkton most passionately; and that love had grown and strengthened every hour. And I had reason to believe that my love was in a measure returned—that the beautiful maiden would give me her hand with her heart, if she had the consent of her parents. And that she disliked Walter Fitzroy I also believed; while that her mother disliked him I knew.

And then I held a commission from the mother to sift out the true character of this man, which, in itself would have been sufficient to cause me to regard him with no very friendly eye.

Again, farther than all this, there was a nameless, shapeless misgiving touching this man's standing in society. I thought of the picture on the wall, and as I looked up into the dark, sinister face that lowered upon me, with its Bedouin-Arab and its Indian physiognomy combined, I felt in my deepest heart—aside from all selfishness—that I owed it to the character of the friendship which I professed, to save the pure and high-minded girl from the low and sensual grasp of such a man!

These thoughts flashed through my mind, as electricity flashes through the heavens, and while I regarded my visitor somewhat in the light of a rival, I at the same time looked upon him as a base and conniving rascal.

The very business he had now in hand proved this. I could see as plainly as though I had been present at their interview, that he had worked upon the old man's weak and changeable mind, and had gained the privilege of coming to me. And he had done it, in order that I might be kept from seeing Cordelia again.

He knew that I was a young physician, just entering into practice, needing all the friendship I could command; and he fancied that I should not dare to oppose such authority as that with which he came vested.

I arose from my chair before I spoke in reply to his last presuming speech, and I tried to be calm and dignified as I said:

“Mr. Fitzroy, I understand the intent of your words very well. You have spoken plainly enough. And now, sir, I will endeavour to speak with equal plainness: Miss Larkton is my patient, and I know that she still depends upon my professional visits; and I shall continue those visits, until I conclude that she needs no more medical assistance, or until I am supplanted by another physician. You have my answer.”

“Well, sir!” cried he, starting to his feet, “you are about as presuming a—a—man as I ever saw. By—, sir! I'll—”

I stopped him with a wave of my hand.

“When you descend to low profanity, sir, you forfeit the right to be listened to by a well-bred gentleman.”

I spoke very calmly, but with deep severity; and as the words passed my lips the man put on his hat, and by the twitching of his fingers and the nervous working of his dark features, I could see that he was

fairly beside himself with passion. He took one step towards the door, and then stopped and turned.

“Doctor Cartwright,” he said, in a hot, hissing tone, “as sure as there's a God in heaven, you shall repent this!”

And with that he left my house.

CHAPTER XI.

As soon as my unpleasant visitor was out of the way, I called my boy, told him that I was simply going out for a walk, and he might remain in the office until I got back. I should not be gone long.

And then I took my cane, and wandered off out of the village, across the mill-brook, into a grove where the people held their summer parties and pic-nics. I walked slowly, deeply engaged with my thoughts, at times moving silently on, and at others talking earnestly with myself. When far away in the wood—far from even the sight of any human habitation—I sat down upon a mossy stone, and began to arrange into something like order of legitimate relation the thoughts and fancies that had been following each other in hap-hazard sequence through my mind.

What simple things, falling across life's pathway at a moment when their impress can be felt, will work potent influence upon the mind. As I took my seat upon the rock, two tuneful robins set up a lovely close beside my resting-place. I listened to their cooing pleas, and to their bursting songs of joy; and I watched them as they followed each other from bough to bough, and as they finally settled down in fond companionship, as though confessing their mutual dependence, each upon the other, for happiness. And I thought how one of those birds would mourn, if some ruthless sportsman should destroy its mate.

A simple thing; and yet it awoke in my bosom deep and powerful emotions. What was I in the world but a wail—a lonely pilgrim—with no bonds of love and affection save such as a breath might destroy? For what did I labour, for what strive, except for self? And yet of self I was not over-thoughtful. I was made for love, and my heart yearned for a mate. Oh! how bright and joyous might be the hours, if I only had one fond heart beating in unison with mine own, resting upon my love, and living only in and for me.

And I thought of Cordelia—and as I thought, my head was bowed, and my hands were folded upon my knees. Never before had I realized how deeply I loved her. The thoughts that had been called to life within me by the bright-winged mates, who still made the air tuneful with their glad strains, had led me to think how lonesome I should be if the light of her friendship were withdrawn from my life; and the bare possibility of such a thing sent a chill to my heart, and a cloud to my brain, that gave token of the sure and bitter agony that would follow such a calamity. Gradually my hands were raised until they rested upon my bosom, and my heart was sending forth its earnest prayer to heaven that the cup might not be snatched from my lips.

I looked forward into the coming time, and I thought how glorious success would be, and how manfully I could labour and strive, if in the end I was to lay the trophy at the feet of my beloved. I thought how bright the prospect was, how I could study and improve, if I had by my side the gentle being whose smiles of love and praise could cheer and sustain me beyond the power of all the rest of earth.

And when I pictured to myself that fair face gazing up into mine, smiling hopefully and confidently from her place of rest upon my bosom, the thrill of joy was so ecstatic, that a murmur of gratitude went forth from my lips, even for the privilege of anticipating so blessed a boon.

And could I lose this? Should I allow the cup to pass from my lips without one manly effort to gain the blessing? Should I suffer the hand of another to mar the moral and spiritual beauty of that precious life, while I might step in and restore it to peace and joy?

At last, I arose to my feet, and spoke my thoughts aloud. They were so closely allied with the resolution to act, that it seemed as though the power within, which had sent them forth, thus gave them form that I might hold them in mind when the hour for action should come.

“Heaven knows there is no mercenary thought within me! If Cordelia, with her spirit of purity and truth, and her face of beauty, were the daughter of the honest cooper, I should be glad. But I will not shrink back because her father is wealthy. I have the faith to believe that they will not attribute such motives to me, and I will be bold, because my heart is right. Cordelia is strong enough to answer me, and I will speak with her. Her mother has sense and judgment, and if the daughter give me hope, I will take counsel of her. The end

I aim at a life of joy and blessedness; and I should sin against my soul did I hesitate now, when there is danger in the way."

And I smote my hand upon my breast, and bade the spirit within be firm. If Cordelia loved me, and Mrs. Larkton spoke favourably, I would rest my hope of the father's consent upon the chance that was to reveal to me the true character and antecedents of Walter Fitzroy.

I reached home at eleven o'clock. How the time had flown.

I had thought of being out only an hour, and I had been gone three. I did not visit Cordelia that day, but I called upon Celestine St. Marcellin, and found her nearly well.

I told her she might start for London at any time after the morrow, but I hoped she would let me know whether she was going, so that I might correspond with her.

How beautiful she looked as she smiled upon me then, and I thought how dangerous is the ground upon which such children of fortune stand. Such beauty, to such as Celestine St. Marcellin, may be a fatal friend.

Alas, that it be so in this Christian land!

Why should I wish to keep track of her? Her question, so lightly and playfully put, reminded me that I had never yet spoken with her upon a subject that had frequently occupied my mind in connection with herself, and I might as well speak with her now as at any time. Indeed, if she thought of leaving so soon, I might not have another opportunity.

"Celestine," said I, (we all called her so, by her own request,) "you are somewhat acquainted, and I have thought several times that I would speak with you about a friend of mine—or rather a friend of other friends of mine—to see if he knew anything of them."

"It would not be very likely, doctor, that I should know a friend of yours. I did not move in that circle."

"Still you may have heard the name, since the family was well known there through the business of the father. I allude to the banker, Fitzroy."

"The banker, Philip Fitzroy, is dead?" said Celestine, with a start.

"Ah, then, you knew him?" I cried, hopefully.

"No," she replied, "but I have heard of him."

"It was not of the banker I wished to inquire, Celestine, but of his son, Walter. Did you ever hear of him?"

Her look was answer enough to the direct part of this question. She gazed into my face with a troubled look, and, after a pause, asked me if Walter Fitzroy was a friend of mine.

"No," said I. "I never knew any of the family until within a very short time, but I have friends who would like to know of this man, if the information could be gained. What did you know of him?"

"If he have friends here who love him, I am sorry for them," said Celestine, shaking her head sadly. "I will frankly tell you what I know, doctor—mind you, I never saw the young man, but I had my information from a reliable source. Philip Fitzroy died, and left his son rich—"

She stopped at this point, and raised her fingers to her lips, and, after a little hesitation, she went on:

"Doctor, you must promise me that you will not ask me how I gained my information. Some time after I have been to London—I may tell you all, but I must not do it now. I wish you would promise me."

I gave her the promise freely, and she proceeded:

"The banker had made a will by which his son was to have a certain amount of property unconditionally, but the bulk of the old man's fortune was, for a term of years, held upon certain conditions. I think those conditions were concerning the marriage of the son with a young lady. I do not understand it exactly, but I know thus much. Well, when the banker was near his end—when it was known that death was upon him—the will was stolen out from the parent's private desk, and a forged will put in its place. The sick man died, the forged will was produced and brought into court, and the officers who have charge of such business pronounced all to be correct; the result of which was that the son came at once into possession of his father's fortune."

"Are you sure of this?" I asked, as the woman stopped speaking.

"Yes, sir. I know it as well as I know anything, which comes to me through the evidence of others."

I could not understand it at first, but presently the thought struck me that Walter had tampered with the will, from the fear that he would not be accepted by the young lady in question. But I was mistaken, as I was destined quickly to discover. I asked Celestine what inducement the son could have had to commit such a crime, and she told me:

"Ah, sir, the same inducement which has led thousands to commit even worse crimes than that—the gaming table!"

"And the fortune—"

"He lost every pound of it, sir. The very men who helped him to forge the will robbed him of his money. Poor fellow! he never would have done it of his own accord."

"The villain!" I cried.

And I was going on, when Celestine put up her hand, and stopped me.

"No, no, doctor—he was not a villain. He was weak, and others led him astray. He was plied with brandy when he procured the original will, and his wicked betrayers kept him under their fingers by the same means. No, dear doctor, Walter Fitzroy was not a villain. Upon my soul, I think he was more to be pitied than condemned. If you could have known the influences that were brought to bear upon him, you would find room in your heart for pity, I know."

"And yet," said I, "you must admit that he had fallen very low."

"Certainly, sir. I know he is lost to the position of manhood in this life; but, oh! I believe that in the world which comes after this, account will be taken of the influences under which he sinned."

I did not object to this proposition.

"You are sure he lost all?" I queried.

"Every pound," she replied.

"And what became of him, then?"

"I cannot tell you, sir," she said, with another sad shake of the head. "I have reason to believe that he wandered about until the last kindly smile faded out before him, and then he destroyed the life that had become a burden to him. I have been told that this was not so; but I cannot help believing that I am right."

"Might he not have gone back to his friends?" I suggested. "How about the girl you spoke of?"

"Ah, sir, he would never have done that. No, no—he was too proud-spirited and manly for such a course."

"You never saw him?"

"I never did."

"Then may you not have been misinformed touching his character?"

"No, sir. I was told by one who knew him well—by one who was nearly dying of grief on his account."

"I suppose I must ask you no questions?"

"None, touching matters already discussed. Remember your promise."

"I remember; and I will be as good as my word."

"But, doctor, there is one thing more I can tell you, that may lift a little of the burden from your spirit. The chief mover in the plot to rob him, was, in turn, himself robbed; so that, of the fortune he helped to win from the banker's son, at the end of a few short months he had not a pound left."

"There, doctor, I believe I can tell you no more of this—at least, not at present. What I may tell you in the future I know not now."

I thanked her for the information she had given me, and having obtained from her a promise that she would not say anything to Mrs. Stevens or her husband about the matter, I took my leave. It was a strange story I had heard; and most strangely had it reached my ear. Touching the character of Walter Fitzroy, I thought I could easily see how Celestine could be mistaken. In the first place, she had probably received her information from an interested party—very likely from a female who had loved him. And, in the second place, it was perfectly natural that one of her nature should have her sympathies aroused by the misfortunes of the misguided man. At all events that she was most lamentably mistaken was very evident, since I had seen enough of the man to assure myself upon that point.

I saw it all now; and I could understand why Fitzroy was so anxious to gain the hand of the wealthy heiress. And I could see one thing farther. I could see why he was so fearful of my influence. Conscious guilt made him timid, and he was afraid that the least opposition to this scheme might lead to the betrayal of his true character, and the situation of his affairs.

My position was a delicate one. How should I proceed if Mr. Larkton insisted upon carrying out the contract made with Philip Fitzroy? I could make known what I had learned, but how could I prove anything? Should I not be set down as having concocted this story for the purpose of furthering my own suit? I returned to my home, and there pondered upon the subject in deepest travail.

On the following morning the cooper came up to inform me that Celestine St. Marcellin intended to take the noon train for London, and that she would like to see me. I went back with him, and found the woman ready to set out. She took me aside, and

asked me to let her pay me for my services; but I would not consent to this. When she found that I would not take money from her, she asked me to do another kindness for her. She was going to London, and she did not wish to carry her jewels with her. Upon due reflection, I told her I would accept the trust upon one condition: the cooper and his wife should witness the transfer. She made no objection to this; but before the good people were called in, I asked her if she could give me any farther information concerning Fitzroy. She had nothing new to tell me. She was sorry to be obliged to conceal anything. I saw that it pained her to think that she could not tell me all I would like to know, so I cut the matter short by summoning the cooper and his wife; and in their presence she gave into my hands a diamond necklace, two diamond ear-drops, a gold ring set with an emerald, two bracelets, one of diamonds in a gold setting, and the other of pearls and garnets, also in gold. I knew not their value, only that thousands were represented by the flashing gems. Once more she assured me that they were truly and honestly hers, and that they were precious to her as tokens of friendship, though she should not hesitate to dispose of them if sore need required it. She told me she would write to me as soon as she found a resting-place.

I had thought of asking her if she would not, in case of need, allow me to summon her as evidence against Walter Fitzroy; but I did not. And after she had gone—for I saw her off in the coach that was to take her to the railway station—I was sorry for my neglect. I was sorry, because, when I began to reflect upon the work I had taken upon myself—or, rather, which had fallen upon my hands—I realized more and more the extreme and perplexing delicacy of my position.

CHAPTER XII.

ON the occasion of my first visit to the mansion, I had gone with much anxiety and with many doubts, for I had then felt that much of the success of my future career might depend upon the result of that visit; but the anxiety and the doubts on that occasion were as the passing of idle whims and fancies, compared with the emotions that oppressed me as I took my way in that same direction on the evening of the day of Celestine's departure. It was a calm, beautiful evening, as warm and balmy as an ushering day of calm sunshine and the aroma of bursting buds could make it, while up from the neighbouring meadows, where the winding brook spread out into tiny lakelets beneath the spreading willows, came the tuneful piping of the frogs and turtles—always pleasant music to me. There was an influence in the season that whispered to me of hope and promise—so calm and so tranquil, and so fraught with signs of peace and rest, that my soul swelled with gratitude for even the friendly inspiration of the hour.

When I reached the dwelling I was received in the hall by Mrs. Larkton, and she was glad to see me. I would have excused myself for having called at so late an hour, but she would not listen. She had been anxious to see me, and the hour was early enough. But we would not wait in the hall. She had something of importance to say to me; but I should see Cordelia first, and she would confer with me afterwards.

I found Cordelia looking far more beautiful than ever before to me. She was dressed in a loose wrapper of fawn-coloured silk; her hair flowed in long, shining curls over her shoulders; and her features, flushed with the roseate tints of returning health, were transcendently lovely. Oh! how beautiful she was! And how pure and good! There was no voluptuousness—no sensual glare—but her type was of the celestial, finding its highest perfection of beauty in that which belonged to the chaste and the spiritual.

We talked awhile of her health, and of the favourable state of the weather; and she told me of the pleasant walk she had taken in the garden with her mother.

We had spent a brief season thus, when Mrs. Larkton arose and excused herself, remarking, by way of explanation, that she had directions to give to some of the domestics.

For the first time I felt uncomfortable and ill at ease in the maiden's presence; and it seemed to me that she was somewhat agitated. I reflected a few moments, and resolved that I would boldly and manfully present the case as I had prepared to do. She was well enough to bear the shock, even allowing that what I should say could so affect her. There was a brief silence, during which I could plainly feel the throbbings of my burdened heart, and then I spoke. My whole frame trembled, and my voice was scarcely more than a palpitating whisper. I reached my hand towards her, and she

placed hers within its grasp. She did it frankly, and I could see that her lips quivered.

"Cordelia," I said, "Cordelia—for by that name you have bade me call you, and I call you so now perhaps for the last time, and it may be for a time that shall be the beginning of many, many more, in the which I may call you so with heavenly joy. I have come here this evening resolved that I will speak with you upon a subject which I can suffer to remain in the realm of dark uncertainty no more. When I first saw you my heart was moved as it had never been moved before. I saw you again and again, and in time I knew that I loved you with the whole undivided love of my heart. On all the earth, there is no other image that finds reflection here. I have watched you as the mariner upon the trackless deck watches the one true star that is to be his guide to the haven of rest; and I have discovered that you are all truth and goodness, and my soul yearns for the blessed possession. I am an orphan, and for some years yet to come I must struggle on towards a stand of manly independence which I hope to gain. My parents were honourable people, and they were good and true. I have reached the age of manhood without a stain on my good name; and before heaven I can boldly affirm that no deed of my life, as I look back upon it, can call a blush to my cheek or a pang to my conscience; for me to tell you that I have no mercenary motive would be simply foolish, because I give you credit for the penetration which must ere this have enabled you to discover that much of my character for yourself. Yet I may say to you, what I have many times said to myself, that I would rather you were the child of lowlier estate, that I might the more readily show to the doubting world the truth and purity of my love. But I cannot allow the freaks of changeable fortune to debar me from seeking the rich boon of your love.

"Cordelia, I love you with all my strength of heart and soul; and if you will give me your love in return, and will trust me to become your husband, I will take you to my bosom, and hold you there as a precious gift from heaven, to be tenderly cared for and sacredly kept,—to be the sole recipient of my faith and favour—to be the one bright centre around which shall gather all my aims and energies—the one holy shrine of earth at which my heart's devotions shall be offered—to be all this to me while life shall last."

I had been gazing steadily into her face, and I had seen that as her tremulousness ceased, the colour faded from her cheeks.

For a few seconds—seconds that were told in double succession by the tumultuous throbbings of my heart—she was still and silent, as though the power of speech had been suspended. Then the spell was broken, and with a wild burst of emotion she sank forward upon my bosom, and sobbed and wept convulsively.

"Cordelia," I cried, winding my arms around her, and drawing her head close down to my breast, "have I offended you? Have I —"

"No, no—oh, no!" she exclaimed, nestling within my embrace as though she sought protection there. "Oh, no,—not so, dear Paul."

How like the sweet music of heaven sounded the voice that thus spoke my name.

The clouds were dispelled; no more doubt, no more anxiety. There was a whole soul of love in that simple sentence; and, feeling that I had the right, I pressed my lips to hers, and imprinted there a kiss, that sealed a love as pure and unselfish as ever found birth in mortal bosom.

I cannot write the words that were spoken after that. They were sweet, holy utterances, telling of love, deep and lasting, and bearing mutual pledges of living faith.

The moments were such as can enter the sum of this earthly life but once, and their breathings were too sacred to be told to other ears. So let the curtain drop upon that blissful scene, and give to me and to her the privilege of throwing the veil of privacy over our first professions of love.

I don't know how long it was before we came up from the entrancing realm of love's sweet dream-land into the world of sober fact; but the first surge of passionate emotion at length gave place to the sway of reason, and we were prepared to look at the stern facts that lay in our way.

"Dear Paul," Cordelia said, still resting her hand in mine, "my mother has told you of Walter Fitzroy, and you know what he is to me; but you cannot know how I dread and fear him—ay, how I loathe him! I think he is a bad man."

"Cordelia," I replied, "he is a bad man; and I wonder how your father can for a moment give an ear to his claim."

A shadow of pain rested upon the maiden's beautiful face as she murmured:

"Alas! my poor papa! You are a physician. Have you never noticed that he is—"

She hesitated, and I helped her out. "Cordelia, since you have broached the subject, I will say to you that your father is suffering from the old blow upon the head. He is not what he was."

Before she could reply Mrs. Larkton came into the room, and as she approached the place where we sat, Cordelia arose and threw herself upon her bosom. She spoke the simple word "mother!" and then, with a deep sob, she burst into tears. The lady turned an inquiring gaze upon me, and I arose and went to her—went to her side, and gently drew the weeping girl upon my own bosom; and as I wound my arms about the willing captive, I gazed eagerly into the mother's face, looking the question I could not ask in words.

A flood of holy light suffused the face wherein I gazed, and directly the mother bowed her head and pressed her hands upon her brow. She stood thus a moment, and then advanced and drew her daughter to herself. There was a momentary pang—a fear that I had done wrong,—but the end was not yet. Mrs. Larkton reached forth and took my hand, and within it she placed the hand of her child; and then she said:

"So far as the power is mine, thus I exercise it. Paul, in heaven's name, beseech you, win her of her father if you can. Win her for your own, and I will pray heaven to bless you while I live!"

Oh, how brightly smiled the celestial host as I wended my way homeward that evening! With the love of the maiden, and the devoted good-will and prayers of the mother, I could not fear for the final result. I meant to call upon Mr. Larkton on the morrow, and make myself acquainted with the work I had before me. I would spare no trouble until I had seen him, and it might be that he would not refuse me the hand of his child, when he knew that her love was fixed upon me.

If ever the heart of man was in a Christian mood, mine was, as I sat in my room that night. My soul was filled with love, and I felt that I could bless every living thing. Even my feelings towards Fitzroy were softened down to pity; and if I could have known how any good could have been secured to him, I would gladly have done it. Enmity could not exist in such an atmosphere as surrounded me, but only love and good-will towards every child of Adam.

The morrow came; at an early hour I repaired to the mansion, and was conducted to the library, where the host was busily engaged over some business documents. He greeted me very kindly, and offered me a seat. He arranged a few more papers, and having come to a stopping-place, he pushed them aside, and turned to me.

"Doctor," he said, "you find me somewhat busy this morning; but I can devote a few moments to you."

It was a delicate subject, but I approached it in a straightforward way, and as directly as possible made him acquainted with my love for his child, and with her love for me. I told him that we had mutually confessed our love, and that we firmly believed we could make each other happy; and then, without having mentioned his wife's name, I asked him for Cordelia's hand.

The old man shook his head mournfully.

"My young friend," he said, "I am sorry that you should have done such a thing. Had you come to me first, you might have saved yourself much trouble; and my daughter might have been spared much unpleasantness of feeling. It cannot be, sir!"

"Cannot?" I repeated. "Oh, sir, do not say that. Before you pass judgment, I beg you to reflect. Is not your daughter's future happiness of enough account—"

He put forth his hand and begged me to desist.

"Doctor Cartwright, you know not what you say. You know not the sacred obligation that rests upon me."

"Mr. Larkton," I cried, impulsively, "if you allude to the arrangement which existed between you and the father of Walter Fitzroy—"

"I allude to that very thing," he interposed; "and if you understand it, then you must know how I, as an honourable man, am bound to carry it out."

"I understand no such thing, sir," I replied. "I think I know fully the nature, and even the very letter, of your arrangement with Philip Fitzroy; but that you are now bound by it, I do not understand; on the contrary, I understand why you should not be."

The banker shook his head again, this time with sad reproach.

"Doctor Cartwright, I hope that you will not join in the cruel work of traducing the character of the only son of the best friend I ever had. It is impos-

sible that the child of Philip Fitzroy could be a bad man. I do not wish to hear him traduced."

"But, sir," I exclaimed, "suppose I should tell you that Walter Fitzroy stole away the will of his dying father and forged another, which he put in its place—another, by which, when his father was dead, he came at once into full possession of the property?"

"Hold, sir! That cannot be; for the son has not yet come into possession of that property; nor can he do so until he is the husband of my child."

I saw now how the villain had been working upon the old man's sympathies, and, without stopping to reflect, I determined to tell the whole story. First I asked him:

"Has Fitzroy told you that he could not gain his father's property until Cordelia had become his wife?"

"He has not only told me so," replied Larkton, "but I know that it must be so. I know how the will was made; for, young man, it was made in my presence!"

"And I tell you, sir," I said, slowly and emphatically, "that Walter Fitzroy stole that will and destroyed it; that the will was forged and put in its place; and when his father was dead, he came into possession of all the property; and that property was lost, every pound of it, at the gaming-table!"

The old man gazed upon me in blank amazement. A little while so, and then he arose and stood before me. He was not angry, but deeply pained and grieved.

"Dr. Cartwright," he said, slowly and solemnly, "I have been prepared for something of this kind; but I had not thought that you would be the man to bring me the meatless bone. Mr. Fitzroy has himself told me of this. There are two Walter Fitzroys, and by some the son of my friend has been confounded with the ruined gambler. I do not blame you, sir; but I ask it as a favour that you will trouble me no more. For your kindness to me and mine I am deeply grateful, and I hope I may be able at some time or other to repay you in more than simple fees. But for the present, sir, your own good sense must tell you that you had better discontinue your professional visits. That will do, sir. I am busy, as you see. I have no fault to find."

I arose, downcast and abashed, and moved towards the door; but when my hand was upon the knob I stopped.

As the first shock of my disappointment passed off, my senses came back to me.

"Mr. Larkton," I said, "you are the only human being to whom I have breathed this thing. If I have been so greatly mistaken, I ask that you will make to me a return of kindness, by not mentioning to Mr. Fitzroy anything that has passed between us."

"You have my promise," he answered.

And I went away with a heavy load removed from my mind.

Was it possible that there were two Walter Fitzroys, and that this one had told the truth?

I did not believe it. I called up the image of this Walter Fitzroy, and as I once more passed those dark features in review, I knew that he was a bold, bad man; and I said to myself that I would expose him.

Somehow, when I regained the fresh air, my feelings arose within me, and, instead of being cast down by the fiat of the banker, a new hope found life in the midst of my reflections.

I would lay Andrew Larkton under a still greater obligation to me. I would save his house from shame, and himself from a great sorrow.

(To be continued.)

MR. RAY SMEE calculates that out of every 21d. received by the Post-office, 6d. is the cost of delivery, and 15d. the profit, and argues that the reduced charge of one halfpenny for postage would produce, in consequence of the increased number of circulars and newspapers, the same net revenue to the exchequer as at present.

RAILWAY SUPERFLUOUS LAND.—Before a railway company can, under the 127th section of the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, sell superfluous lands, they are bound to offer them to all the owners of adjacent lands, whether owners in fee or merely leasees. The Master of the Rolls thus held, in the case of Coventry v. the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company, which was a suit instituted against the company to restrain them from selling as superfluous lands certain pieces of land taken by the company under their Act, but which were not required for the purposes of their undertaking, without first giving to the plaintiffs the option of exercising the right of pre-emption which they claimed as adjoining owners under the 127th section of the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1863.



[LORD BROUGHAM.]

THE LATE LORD BROUGHAM.

DEAD to the world for years past, Henry Lord Brougham and Vaux is now dead in the literal sense of the word. On Thursday night, May 7th, this Portentum of labour, and usefulness, "died in his sleep" at his favourite seat near Cannes. Although close upon his ninetieth birthday, he was in excellent health up to the last, eating, drinking, chatting, thinking and taking exercise as usual. On Thursday, as was customary, one of his servants visited his chamber, to see that the veteran nobleman was well disposed for the night, and then discovered that his master had passed quietly and calmly into that long last sleep, from which none ever awake. Great and laborious as has been his career, Lord Brougham has outlived himself; for years he has been his own monument.

Of late he has taken little or no part in the politics of the country, but, living in seclusion at Cannes, has been lost to the minds of the rising generation, who have long learnt to consider him almost in the light of a celebrity of the past age. It is difficult to know in exactly what light to regard him, whether as a statesman, a lawyer, an orator, or a man of science: for in all these various paths he has shined; in fact, he knew something of almost everything. A great lawyer, a great orator, a great statesman, Lord Brougham has made himself a place in the history of England, which few men can ever hope to exceed. The man who fought the battle of liberty against the profligate court of George IV., who beard the King himself, who was a Liberal, when liberalism was looked upon as the foulest heresy, and who, forty years ago, denounced Roman Catholic oppression, the corn laws, the severity of the penal code, and a dozen other grievances long since forgotten; who was the pioneer of those law reforms and the

educational system, which are the glories of the present time. These were the achievements which have made Lord Brougham's fame, and rendered his name a household word.

Henry Brougham, Baron Brougham and Vaux of Brougham, in the county of Westmoreland, was born at Edinburgh, September 19, 1778. The entry of birth is in the following terms: "Wednesday, 30th September, 1778. Henry Brougham, Esq., parish of St. Giles, and Eleonora Syme, his spouse, a son born the 19th current, named Henry Peter. Witnesses, Mr. Archibald Hope, Royal Bank, and the Rev. Principal Robertson." The subjoined note, settling the exact place of birth of the late learned lord, is given in the appendix to the description of the Greyfriars' Churchyard, and its monuments, recently published by Mr. Moodie Millar: "At the head of the Cowgate, above the shop of Mr. Thompson, grocer, in the third flat, was born Lord Brougham. The fact was given by Mr. Campbell, the late Recorder, who accompanied Lord Brougham, the late Sir Robert Peel, and Lord Lincoln to view the antiquities of the Greyfriars' graveyard; and, when standing above the north gate, his lordship, pointing to the house, stated the fact to the party, as correcting the generally received opinion of the birth being in No. 1, St. Andrew Square."

The late Peer was the eldest son of Henry Brougham, Esq., of Scales Hall, Cumberland, and Brougham Hall, Westmoreland, by Eleanor, daughter of the Rev. James Syme, maternal niece of the historian Robertson. He received the first seeds of his education at the High School, Edinburgh, under Mr. Luke Fraser, and afterwards under Dr. Adam, author of the celebrated treatise on "Roman Antiquities," and from the High School, he passed, in due course of time, to the University of Edinburgh, where he was a pupil of Dugald Stewart, Black, Robinson, and several other well-

known professors. It was by his aptness for mathematical and physical science, that he first made himself distinguished, his earliest published production being a paper on the refraction and reflection of light, which was printed in the *Transactions of the Royal Society* for 1798. Notwithstanding he had early a taste for the Bar, and accordingly, after a lengthened tour in Prussia and Holland, he was admitted an Advocate at the Scottish Bar in 1800. Residing in Edinburgh, he took a prominent part in the debates of the Speculative Society of that metropolis, and was one of the chief writers in the *Edinburgh Review*, while that periodical was still in its infancy. Even down to the year 1828 he continued to write regularly for its pages. In 1803, when only twenty-four years of age, he published his "Inquiry into the Colonial Policy of the European Powers," in 2 vols. 8vo., a work of vast research. In 1804, Mr. Brougham took up his residence in London, and in 1808 was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn, and entered upon practice as a barrister in the King's Bench and on the Northern Circuit. He soon after put up to represent Camelford in Parliament and was elected.

In 1812 Mr. Brougham helped to gain a victory over the Ministry upon the "Orders in Council," and was invited to stand for Liverpool. He did so, and after a hard canvass was defeated by Mr. Canning. In December of the same year Leigh Hunt, editor of the *Examiner*, was prosecuted for a libel on the Prince Regent, and Mr. Brougham defended him. The summing up of Ellenborough this time insured a conviction. The detestation with which George IV. ever regarded Brougham, is said to have dated from this occasion. It was well repaid, and thoroughly confirmed by much subsequent defiance, but it did not by any means impede a near intimacy between the offender and others of the Royal Family.

He was returned to the House of Commons in the year 1816, as member for Winchester, a borough of Lord Darlington's. He was the most constant, the most successful, the most humorous speaker in the House, and at the same time the most elastic and unextinguishable, but his tact and his manner were far inferior to his talent, and his appearance, at once highly remarkable and absurdly ungainly, seemed to justify the distortions of the caricaturists, and the lampoons of the ballad-makers.

In the Session of 1816 he opened fire upon the formidable columns of the Army Estimates, and he esteemed the speech he made on this occasion as his most successful effort in the Lower House. He commenced his crusade against the existing Law of Libel, or rather against the existing practice of gagging the Press. This was his first laborious Session. It was the beginning of a series of years in which his average addresses to the House numbered not much below 300. He was too frequent and too diffuse a speaker to be thoroughly relished.

During many years it was Brougham's line, as a leader of Opposition, to discharge all the shafts of irony, sarcasm, innuendo, and personality against the Ministerial measures as a whole, but he kept also a definite programme of his own, of which general education and prevention of charitable abuses were prominent parts; he had to denounce both the method of procuring funds and the method of distributing them, to assail sinecures, to remonstrate against Canning's allowance as Ambassador to Lisbon, while characterizing the Lottery Bill as an "Act to raise moneys to His Majesty by encouraging vice and immorality among the lower orders." As he grew towards 40, his exertions began to tell upon his gaunt frame. In the spring of 1819 a severe illness kept him for some weeks away from the debates, but he appeared in the autumn to raise his voice loudly against the "Seditious Meetings Prevention Bill," the Ministerial corollary upon the yeomanry charge at Peterloo.

It was now that his powers were taxed to the utmost in defending Queen Caroline. On June 6, he was heard in the Lords on the method of procedure adopted against the Queen, on the 17th against the principle of the bill, on the 18th in reply to the same; 49 days were occupied in hearing the evidence, and he replied on the evidence on the 3d and 4th of October. It was a case in which even latent powers might have struggled into utterance, but a review of Brougham's conduct of the case would show him rather the subdued, calm, and elaborate, than the hot and reckless advocate he appears here, and it was rather his art than his anxiety that made him so appear like a man suppressing by effort those impulses which made him ordinarily launch into violent declamation, and give too much licence both to temper and to tongue. He displayed the shrewdest sagacity alike in the examination and in the summary of the evidence, by implying much more than he said.

Some portion, at least, of his permanent reputation will rest upon a piece of oratory which, rendered historical as it is by the nature of the trial and the

rank of the accused, will be read and remembered far beyond the circumference of his more useful and uncontested fame; but it made for his instant popularity as much as for his ultimate renown; it established him not only as a man of genius, but as a man whose judgment was not always erratic, angry, or self-willed. These labours did not preclude Mr. Brougham from taking part in the more familiar business or pleasures of life. On the very eve of his final harangue "he dined at Holland House, and staid till 11 at night, talking *de omni scibili*, French cookery, Italian poetry, and so on," and in the month of June he moved for leave to bring in his first Educational Bill, a general Parish School Bill, which gave a moderate superintendence to the church, but provided the Scriptures only, without any special formula, should be taught. The outcry of the Dissenters compelled him to withdraw it. The state of Ireland and the Roman Catholic claims now coming into the front rank of debate, offered him another base of operations; and it was in denouncing the conduct of Canning on this last question, that he exceeded on one occasion the usual and fair licence of Parliamentary language, and forced from his opponent the celebrated "lie direct," which, happily for both, but chiefly through the tact of Sir Robert Wilson, ended in a mutual retraction, sealed by interchange of hands in the lobby.

But during all this time there was another talent which we had forgotten to mention. In 1825 he published, in the form of a pamphlet, some observations on the education of the people, addressed to Dr. Birkbeck, his great coadjutor in the formation of those Mechanics' Institutes, which are now so universal throughout this country. During this same period he took a chief part in establishing the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, and he advocated its cause in the earliest of its publications, issued in March, 1827—"A treatise on the Pleasures and Advantages of Science." In 1827, also, one act of justice was tardily done him, or rather a long injustice removed. As Attorney-General to the Queen he had sat within the bar of the Court of King's Bench. The detestation of George IV. and the acquiescence of Eldon deprived him of the patent of precedence, which by the etiquette of the Bar ought to have followed. The silk gown was at length conferred upon him, just before the Trinity Term of 1827. At the death of Canning, Brougham took a strong line about the Catholic claims, dissuading the mere agitation as it was kept up by the Catholic Association, but pledging himself as one who knew his power to carry it eventually, as it was carried by the Peel and Wellington Administration, in 1829. A more professional question drew from him one of his most splendid, though one of his most practical harangues, and will, perhaps, more than any other, go down to posterity associated with his name. On the 7th of February, 1828, he delivered his great speech on Law Reform, of which the immediate result was a two-fold commission issued by Lyndhurst—one to inquire into the law of real property, the other into the law respecting actions, process, and pleading.

The year 1829 bred disunion in the Tory camp, for Catholic Emancipation rode roughshod over the sensibilities of men like Inglis and Eldon. This section, considering that they owed it to their principles to visit their erring friends with their heavy displeasure, threw the game into the hands of the Liberal party, and more especially into the hands of Brougham. No man was ever in a better position to take the ball at the rebound.

At this crisis of his fortunes we ought not to omit another of the conditions of his success—he proved his great capacity for hard work. On one day of his canvass for Yorkshire he addressed nine meetings of the electors, and travelled post 120 miles in order to do it. The next morning he was in the Assize Court at York, fresh and vigorous, at the usual hour.

On the 2nd of November, 1830, the day on which Parliament opened, Mr. Brougham in the Lower House, and Lord Grey in the Upper, confident of their majority in the Commons, and alike persuaded that the time for action had arrived, threw down the gauntlet of Reform. On the 13th he confided to his friends and followers his own scheme, the main provision of which was household suffrage, but he professed himself willing to deal tenderly with the close boroughs. The Ministers elected to take the sense of the House upon the Civil List. On the 15th the Opposition carried their amendment on the Civil List debate by a majority of twenty-nine. On the 16th the Duke of Wellington resigned, and Lord Grey was sent for by the King. Brougham had to choose whether he would wait quietly for the construction of the new Government, letting his motion and his claims take their chance, or whether, by asserting his power, he would secure immediate attention for both. In his speech on the evening of resignation he assumed, with an air of confidence, that

he should not occupy any office in Lord Grey's Cabinet, and declared that his plan of Reform should come on not later than the 25th, "and farther, as no change in the Administration can by possibility affect me, I beg it to be understood that in putting off the motion I will put it off to the 25th, and no longer. I will then, and at no more distant day, bring forward the question of Parliamentary Reform, whatever may be the condition of circumstances, and whosoever may be His Majesty's Ministers." On the 17th and on the 19th he continued to imply by his tone and manner in the House his adherence to these intentions. The 19th was Friday. On Monday, the 22nd, and before his patent of peerage was made out, he sat on the woolsack in the House of Lords, Lord High Chancellor of England.

It must have been a sad trial for poor Lord Eldon to see his old enemy in the Chancellor's robes. In 1825 the great orator had a pretty fling at the veteran Chancellor's tenacity of place. "Of what," he asked of the Ministry, "are they afraid [in delaying to repeal the penal laws against the Roman Catholics] ? Do they think that one of their coadjutors, a man of splendid talents, of profound learning and unwearied industry, would give up his place—that he would quit the Great Seal? Prince Hohenlohe is nothing to the man who would effect such a miracle. His patience under threats can only be rivalled by the fortitude with which he bears the prolonged distress of the suitors in his own court. The more splendid the emolument of the situation, the more extensive its patronage, the more he is persuaded that it is not allowed to a wise and good man to tear himself from it." Lord Eldon was not backward in returning the compliment. "No young lady," says he, "was ever so unforgiving for being refused a silk gown, as Brougham is with me, because, having insulted my master, the insulted don't like to clothe him with distinction, honour, and silk."

From 1830 to 1834, the abolition of slavery in all our colonies; the opening of the East-India trade, and the destruction of the Company's monopoly; the amendments of the criminal law were effected; vast improvements in the whole municipal jurisprudence, both as regards law and equity, were made; the settlement of the Bank charter; the total reform of the Scotch municipal corporations; the entire alteration of the poor laws took place; and an ample commencement was made in reforming the Irish Church, by the abolition of ten bishoprics.

In November, 1834, Sir Robert Peel took the reins of government, Brougham resigning office with his colleagues. Lord Melbourne, however, came into power the following April; but Lord Brougham was not reappointed to the chancellorship. This, of course, caused much speculation. Some said that the King's objections overruled the Ministers; others that the oil of Melbourne's easy temperament had discovered a quality in Brougham which would not mix with it. Lord Brougham himself tells us plainly that the fault was not in the King, and that the reasons for his exclusion were not communicated to him. In whatever way the formal displacement was made, it was everywhere well understood that he was displaced, and it is impossible to deny him the praise of magnanimity, for the support which he gave to the Melbourne Cabinet during the two following Sessions. It was the harangue upon what was known at the time as the Canadian revolt, characterized throughout by his old fire and pungency, which accomplished the imminent deadly breach between Lord Brougham and the pure Whigs. "I knew," said Lord Melbourne in reply, "I knew all along that it must come, that the spirit of bitterness which took its rise in the noble and learned lord's mind in the beginning of 1835 must break out at last; and then he launched into a little sarcasm upon Brougham's patriotism and regard for the public service. Brougham retaliated by denying that the motive of his conduct was changed, by denouncing the declarations against Reform, which Lord John Russell had made in the preceding November, and ended by 'hurling his defiance at Melbourne's head.'"

From that time he held an independent position in the Upper House, freely criticising the political measures of Whig and Tory governments alike, but paying constant and careful attention to the legal business of the House as one of the "law lords." In 1848 his lordship, who had previously purchased an estate at Cannes, in the south of France, proposed to the newly-established French republic to be naturalized as a citizen in that country; but, in reply to his application, he was informed by M. Marrast that his wish could be carried out only by his ceasing to be an English peer. After his release from the duties of the senate and the forum, Lord Brougham contributed largely to the literature of the day. In 1838 he published the collected edition of his speeches, with notes and introductions, and a dis-

course on the eloquence of the ancients. He also edited Paley's "Natural Theology," and wrote "Dissertations on subjects of Science connected with Natural Theology." In 1839 appeared the first of his "Historical Sketches of Statesmen who flourished in the Reign of George III.," a work which he completed in 1843, and two years later published his "Lives of Men of Art and Science," belonging to the same period. He also edited the speech of Demosthenes *De Corrad.* After the passing of the Reform Bill, and his retirement from official life, Lord Brougham exerted his energies in working out his favourite scheme of Law Amendment, and in the establishment of courts in which cheap justice might be dealt out to the middle and lower classes. So early, indeed, as in the month of June, 1839, he introduced into the House of Commons a measure, "the declared object of which," in the words of a contemporary memoir, "was to bring justice home to every man's door at all times of the year, by the establishment of local courts. By this Bill the law of arbitration was to be extended, a general local jurisdiction established, and courts of reconciliation were to be introduced." This measure, somewhat modified, is now seen in full operation in the County Courts, established about twelve years since. A succession of other Bills for the reform of proceedings in bankruptcy were afterwards introduced by Lord Brougham, who, from his first entrance into the Upper House, "has laboured for the improvement of the law with a zeal approaching to enthusiasm." In 1850, Lord Brougham resumed his scientific researches, and communicated to the Royal Society a paper of "Experiments and Observations on the Properties of Light," which he followed up by further papers on the same subject in 1852 and 1853, in which he proves the principle upon which Newton established his theory of light to be inconclusive. In 1855 he published, in conjunction with E. J. Roeth, Esq., an "Analytical View of Newton's Principia." He gave to the world a paper on the Integral Calculus, and contributed farther articles on Light to the *Transactions of the Institute of France*, of which body he was a member. In 1819 Lord Brougham married Mary Anne, widow of John Spalding, Esq., and eldest daughter of Thomas Eden, Esq., deputy-auditor of Greenwich Hospital (brother of the late Lord Auckland and Henley), by whom he had an only daughter, who died young, November 30, 1839. In 1860 he obtained a fresh patent of peerage, with remainder to his brother, Mr. William Brougham, and his issue male.

Few men have so long a lease of life as this veteran nobleman, and still fewer have lived so useful a career. He spent his life in hard work for the benefit of his countrymen, and he has died, leaving behind him a fame which is world-wide, and will receive an honourable place in the history of his country.

At Cannes he was beloved by all the inhabitants; Sunday after Sunday his face was to be seen in the little English church near his own chateau, as fervent a worshipper as any present. How greatly will it now be missed. Both French and English all showed their sympathy and admiration of the late great Englishman in a thousand ways. Everybody attended his funeral, the plainness and simplicity of which, added greatly to the solemnity and pathos of the ceremony, already great from the pious and reverend demeanour of the crowd. The Reverend E. F. Raffe made a slight address in a few earnest words, which spoke more than volumes of panegyric. Until its final destination shall be made known, whether in the crypt of Christ's Church at Cannes, or by the side of his daughter in Lincoln's Inn, or in Westminster Abbey, the coffin was placed in the crypt of Christ's Church. Calmly and quietly Henry Brougham went to his last rest, regretted by the world, although, perhaps, but little missed, except in the little village in which his last days were spent. As calmly and unostentatiously were his funeral obsequies performed, but the very absence of show and grandeur, rendered the last tributes paid to his memory the more affecting and imposing.

THE PROPERTY OF MARRIED WOMEN.—The text of the Bill brought in by Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Russell Gurney, and Mr. J. Stuart Mill, to amend the law with respect to the property of married women, has been issued. It provides that every woman shall, notwithstanding her coverture, retain possession of all her real and personal property, whether belonging to her before marriage or acquired afterwards, free from the debts and obligations of her husband, and from his control. The earnings of a married woman, derived from any occupation carried on separately from that of her husband, are also to be deemed her personal estate. On the other hand, a husband is not to be liable for the debts of his wife, contracted before marriage, and shall not be liable in damages for any wrong committed by her.

Upon the death of a wife intestate, her husband is, according to the provisions of this Bill, to take the same distributive share in her personal estate as a wife would take in the personal estate of her husband if he died intestate, and subject thereto her personal estate is to go as it would have gone if her husband had pre-deceased her. There is, however, a reservation of the right of a husband to hold his wife's real estate as tenant by courtesy. Questions in dispute between husband and wife as to title to a possession of personal property are to be decided in a summary way by any Chancery judge, or at the option of the petitioner and irrespective of the value of the property in dispute, by a county court judge. When, however, a husband has been in the habit of receiving his wife's rents and profits, he is not to be held liable to account for them afterwards. The existing law relating to the making of settlements before or after marriage is not interfered with. It is proposed that the Act, which is not to extend to Scotland, shall come into operation on the 1st January next.

THE WITCH FINDER.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHEN Temperance Stoughton had finished the details of her accusation against Hester and Waybrook, in her uncle's room, where we left her, the judge bent his glances upon her, with a kindness and sympathy he had never before shown her, and said:

"Enough, Temperance. I will see, before I sleep, that a warrant for the arrest of these two women is lodged with the chief constable of Salem. They shall be in prison early in the morning."

"Yes, my child; depend upon our zeal in the matter," declared Cotton Mather, pressing the hand of the supposed victim. "A righteous vengeance shall be taken upon Mrs. Waybrook and her daughter. You are very pale," he added, with a glance and voice full of tender interest. "You suffer greatly."

"More than words can tell you," rejoined the unscrupulous woman, with an assumed meekness and resignation, "but I can endure it patiently, since such is the will of heaven."

"You had better retire to your room, Temperance. Go to bed immediately, and try and get rested. Mr. Mather and I will talk a while, but we will take care not to disturb your slumbers, and shall be ready to come to you at the slightest warning," observed Stoughton.

"Then I had better go to bed," rejoined Temperance, "my need of sleep and rest is so great, I can hardly keep my eyes open. Besides, I feel sure that no farther harm will come to me."

"Then go, and may the blessing of heaven be with you!" remarked Mather.

The scheming woman withdrew, with as much calmness and grace as she could command.

"Thank heaven! this is over," she ejaculated, with a flush of exultation, as she reached the privacy of her sitting-room. "I am successful! Uncle and Mather are both duped completely. The hunt for Hester Waybrook is begun. How fortunate I am," she murmured to herself, as she glided through the darkness towards the cottage of her servant. "That girl is sure to be arrested and hanged, if she does not run away, or is not carried off by Boardbush. In any case, she will give me no farther trouble. As to Philip, he is already in my hands, and quite at my mercy. I can do as I will with him."

Such is guilt; never so full of its wicked hopes as at the very moment preceding its detection, defeat, and ruin.

Revolving in her sinister anticipations, the judge's niece walked with such rapidity, such impatience, that she was speedily at her destination. To her intense astonishment she saw that the door of the cottage was wide open, that a window had been dashed in pieces, and that Lettis, troubled and excited, was in the act of nailing a board over the aperture.

"Good heavens!" gasped the horrified observer, with an apprehension, a sense of calamity, as sickening as it was sudden. "What can have happened?"

At the sound of her voice, too unnatural for recognition, the woman appeared at the broken window, in a state of the wildest alarm, demanding:

"Who's there?"

"Me, Lettis," perceiving by the old woman's distress and all the aspects of the scene, that something very disagreeable had transpired at the cabin since she left it. "What are you doing? Where's Philip?"

Lettis emitted a choking sound from her throat,

struggling with her emotions, and soon managed to articulate:

"Gone, my young lady."

At this announcement—so unexpected, so fatal to her dearest wishes, to all her late anticipations—Miss Stoughton's senses seemed about to desert her.

"Gone!" she repeated, sinking down in the snow. "Impossible! How could he go? He was unconscious."

Arising as well as she could, and availing herself of her servant's assistance, Temperance was soon in the cottage, where she received, through her own eyes, a full confirmation of the terrible announcement.

"He's gone. Who has released him?"

"Who? His bear!"

"His bear? Bruno?"

"Yes, my young lady. He came leaping through the window, dashing it all in pieces, and—"

"You recognized the bear? He was Philip's?"

"Certainly. I knew him at a glance. There is no other bear in Salem like him."

"It seems that the animal is loose to-night," said Temperance, remembering what her uncle and Mather had said about seeing a black bear, during their walk homewards. "He must have scented his master."

"Nothing is more likely. They were always together. Be that as it may, the bear came tumbling into the room, whereupon Philip arose to his feet, shouting and rejoicing, seized a blanket—for you had burned his coat—and dashed away as quick as lightning through the broken window, followed by Bruno."

The judge's niece sank into a chair, becoming as white as a sheet, and her head reeled as if her senses were about to forsake her.

"Did I hear aright?" she inquired, in a husky whisper. "Did you say that Philip arose to his feet, shouting and rejoicing, the moment the bear leaped into the room?"

The woman nodded.

"He had not been asleep at all then?"

"No, my young lady. I saw him raise his head from his pillow, and look at me just before Bruno made his appearance—that is to say, the instant he heard the bear under the window."

The white face of the astounded woman seemed to become still whiter. She shook like a person in convulsions.

She wept tears of rage and mortification. The whole basis of her late rejoicings had vanished.

"Be calm, be calm, my young lady!" implored Lettis, continuing her ministrations. "You must not give way to this despair."

"Hush, Lettis! A curse is upon me! The fates have willed that I should perish miserably in the career upon which I have entered. Bring me a dose of your surest poison, and let me take it. You can see how he must hate and despise me after this horrible unmasking—this fatal detection. I must die!"

Instead of replying directly to these wild exclamations, Lettis folded her arms upon her broad chest, and stood contemplating her mistress in silence, appearing to regain her calmness in the exact proportion that Temperance lost hers. There was even a scornful look upon her coarse features.

Miss Stoughton regained her self-possession, as if by magic, and said:

"Could you not have prevented Philip and the bear from escaping?" demanded Temperance.

"No. I tried to do so, but the beast turned upon me, as fierce as a tiger, and would have torn me in pieces, if I had persisted in the effort!"

"How long ago did all this happen?"

"Not more than half an hour!"

"Did you notice which way Philip went, after leaving the cottage?"

"No. I was too weak, too excited to do so. He may have gone home, or he may have hastened to Hester's!"

"Suppose you see?" suggested Temperance. "You can do so while I am recovering from this horrible shock!"

Lettis lighted a lantern, which she concealed under a cloak in which she wrapped herself, without a word, and vanished. Her mistress took a blanket and nailed it over the broken window, to exclude the cold air, and seated herself before the fire, replenishing it with fuel. A quarter of an hour thus passed—half an hour—at the end of which time Lettis came hastening into the cottage.

"He has not gone home," she reported. "All is still there—no one is stirring, no signs of such an excitement as would have naturally followed Philip's return. As to the home of the Waybrooks, it is entirely deserted!"

"Deserted? How do you know that?"

"By actual observation. Finding no one at home, a broken window—another bear-hole, I should say,

just like ours—tempted me to enter, and I went all over the house."

"I wish you had also gone to the house of Boardbush, to tell him of our misfortune and ask his assistance. He promised to come to me during the evening—at my uncle's, if I left a light in my window; otherwise, here. Where can he be?"

The question was scarcely uttered, when heavy and hurried footsteps resounded on the walk.

"It's Boardbush!" exclaimed Miss Stoughton, joyfully, starting to her feet.

A considerable change had taken place in the appearance of this terrible man since we last beheld him: that change which only a startling reverse can occasion. His face was sterner than usual, his air desperate, his eyes restless and blood-shot, his whole soul in a subdued fury. His hand had clutched the formidable sword he usually wore, and a brace of immense horse-pistols—each about as large as a modern carbine—had made their appearance in the leather belt that encircled his waist.

The two women instantly saw that their visitor was in a gloomy mood, terribly disappointed and enraged, as savage as a wolf in a trap. Casting his glances sharply around the apartment, he noticed the absence of Philip, the state of the window, the paleness and agitation of his confederate.

"I foresaw as much," he muttered, sinking into the chair Lettis placed for him. "Your lover has been rescued, or made his escape?"

Temperance assented, briefly explaining her misfortunes.

"My instinct told me so, before my arrival," pursued Boardbush. "There's nothing like a trouble of your own, to quicken your perception of those which afflict your neighbours. We're in the same boat, Temperance, even in our misfortunes!"

"You mean that the girl has again given you a refusal!"

"Worse than that," replied the visitor. "Goodness! do you suppose it has taken me all this time to settle that question? What I mean is that the girl's father—the trader—has slipped through my fingers."

"The trader? Mr. Waybrook?"

"Yes. He came home with Philip, you know—or don't know—and was found insensible by me at the landing, soon after you found your sweet gem of beauty, and was taken home with me. Having occasion to be gone half an hour, I left him locked up in my house, under pretence of going for his wife and daughter. When I returned, he had vanished."

For a moment, Miss Stoughton was crushed by these revelations.

"How terribly unfortunate we are!" she murmured. "Both defeated! both ruined!"

"I found footprints in the ashes," concluded the narrator, "and also on the roof and in the yard—those of the trader, of course, to begin with, and blending with them the footprints of a woman."

"A woman?" repeated Miss Stoughton, wonderingly. "Who can she be?"

The Witch Finder drew nearer to his confederate, looked around sharply—thus betraying a nervousness and excitement quite unusual to him—and then replied, in a whisper:

"The rescuer was the White Angel!"

"The White Angel?"

"No other. The White Angel and Hester Waybrook—they are one and the same person."

Miss Stoughton's surprise held her speechless.

"Where, in all Salem, if we except Hester," pursued Boardbush, "where shall we find a woman capable of assuming such a character? Ghost, witch, or spirit, the White Angel is not, but a clever and daring woman, who has put the superstitions of our people to good use. I am certain that she is Hester, and only the actual proof is wanting. I cannot even guess how she learned that I had taken her father home with me. It must be that my threats alarmed her, and that she followed me to the beach, determined to keep an eye upon me, and saw all that followed. What I do know is, that she has released the trader, and thus proved that we are not yet half awake to the resources of our enemies, or to the difficulties of the task we have undertaken."

"I am ready to accept your conviction as the truth," responded Miss Stoughton, "and it is easy to see that we have no child's play before us, if that girl be really the White Angel."

"True. That girl is more dangerous to us, more difficult to manage, than all the rest of our enemies."

"It is a good thing, then, that I have renewed my accusation against her, and put it into shape for instant legal action."

The Witch Finder looked at her inquiringly.

"It was agreed between us, you know," she explained, "that I should accuse her."

Boardbush was at first annoyed, as she proceeded to detail what she had done, at the idea of her taking

such an important step without consulting him, but a little reflection calmed him.

"After all," said he, "I do not blame you. 'The warrant will be a good club to hold over the girl's head, and may even become of the first importance.'"

"I comprehend. You mean to seize the girl yourself, and carry her off altogether?"

"Exactly. Goodness! I've had a sloop at the wharf for three days past, ready to sail with her at a minute's warning for the West Indies, Tophet, or China. Of course, I mean to work secretly, and you must take the same course with regard to Philip. My first step, when I found that the trader was gone, was to send twenty men to watch on all of the roads leading from Salem, so that the fugitives will be caught if they think of flight inland."

"And I," observed Lettis, "have been to the house of Mr. Ross, and to that of the Waybrooks. The one is deserted, and the other all wrapped in sleep."

"Good! bravo!" exclaimed the Witch Finder, with a gleam of satisfaction. "We are worthy of acting together. Bravo! the sky begins to brighten! We shall certainly have them, whenever we choose to put our hands upon them."

The joy this assurance gave Temperance was as intense as wicked. Her features reddened with an evil hopefulness, and her eyes blazed like those of a tigress scenting a victim.

"Well, what shall we do, now that this is known to us?" she demanded. "You intend to seize the girl, of course, and help me to get hold of Philip?"

"Well, the best thing you can do, for the present, is to go home and go to bed. You can do nothing to forward our projects, until I learn where the fugitives are hiding, and it is useless for you to expose yourself with me to the cold and darkness. I shall be on the wing every minute, of course, until everything is arranged on a different footing. Meet me here at sunrise, and I will endeavour to have good news for you."

With this, the Witch Finder glided from the cottage, as abruptly as he had entered, and Temperance lost no time in retracing her steps to her uncle's, and to her own apartment.

CHAPTER XXV.

WITH the first beams of the new day, the judge's niece slipped from her bed, opened the shutters of an eastern window, and looked forth a moment upon the unbroken surface of the snow, returning to her tumbled couch. Her manner was as weary as wakeful, her aspect worn and haggard.

"How I have been thwarted—duped!" fell from her lips, in a tone of compressed rage, as she arose to her feet. "What a horror it is—my detection by Philip and his escape! Oh, if fate should again place him in my hands, I would not fail to keep him!"

She paused before her bureau, taking from one of its drawers a small paper box, an inch square, containing a white powder. It was one of the several preparations of that nature with which Lettis and Boardbush had made her acquainted. This box she put in the pocket of the dress she was intending to wear.

"And that bear!" she continued, knitting her brows. "How strange that he should have released Philip! The beast is a nuisance and a peril. I'll send Lettis to kill him at the first opportunity," she added. "He is kept in the wood-shed, where she can easily poison him, without the knowledge of Philip's sister and father!"

She commenced her toilet, moving noiselessly about the apartment, so as not to disturb her uncle, who was in the habit of sleeping late in the morning. When she had finished dressing, she stationed herself at a window from which the cottage of Lettis was visible, and looked long and fixedly in that direction.

A few minutes longer the uneasy woman waited, moving about her apartment and looking repeatedly from the windows, and then she stepped to the front door, looking forth upon the scene the vicinity presented, the smoking columns which had begun to rise above the town, and all the aspects of the morning.

"Strange that he is not there!" she ejaculated, in a whisper that had become husky with her uneasiness. "Strange that Lettis does not come to me! Where can she be?"

The uneasy woman was soon gratified by a view of Lettis, who had left her cottage and set out for the judge's. Returning to her seat by the fire, Temperance waited impatiently.

"Boardbush has not come, I suppose," questioned the mistress, scanning the gloomy face of her servant.

Lettis shook her head, with a sigh, taking a seat.

"And you bring no news?"

"Nothing very satisfactory, my young lady," was the answer. "The old corporal is absent from his house, and as to Philip and Bruno, I have not the slightest idea of their whereabouts. I have just been to the house of old Mr. Ross, pretending to want fire, and took occasion to ask him for news of his son. He told me that he had received no late advices, and showed that he knew nothing of Philip's strange return. This much is certain, therefore, that Philip did not go near his father and sisters, when he made his escape from us!"

"Of course not," commented Temperance, in a voice tremulous with vexation. "He went to the arms of his dear beloved Hester! They've doubtless been together ever since, wherever they have been hiding!"

She arose to her feet, too excited to remain seated, and commenced pacing to and fro in the apartment.

"You look tired, my young lady," observed Lettis. "You must have rested badly?"

"Rest? I have been in tortures every minute. I made every effort to sleep, but could not. The thought of the trick played upon me by Philip kept returning to me. Is it not dreadful?"

"I think that Boardbush will help us out of this trouble," declared Lettis. "He is quite as much interested in the return of Philip as we are, and will be sure to have good news for us, when he makes his appearance."

"It may be—it must be," was the response of Temperance, as she resumed her walk. "He has been searching all night for a trace of the girl and her friends, and must have formed some idea of the course they have taken. His resources are many and powerful; his interests, as you say, fully equal to our own. We will not despair till we have seen him. After all, the absence of Boardbush is more likely to be a good indication than a bad one. He has, doubtless, found a clue to the whereabouts of the fugitives, and is engaged in following it."

Lettis assented to this view of the matter, and completed the preparation of breakfast, while Temperance Stoughton continued to watch for the Witch Finder's arrival. It was not long before she saw him approaching, as swiftly and secretly as possible, and a moment after he was in her presence.

The face of Boardbush was so stern, so fixed with the cold to which he had been continually exposed in his absence, so set in its grimness, that it was a puzzle to his companions. The greeting he received from Temperance Stoughton was accordingly tinged with a shade of disappointment, although it expressed the satisfaction his return caused her.

"You, too, have been deserted by fortune, it seems," she murmured. "You have learned nothing?"

The Witch Finder helped himself to a chair, thrust his half-frozen hands over his blaze, rubbed his red cheeks, shook the snow from his coat, pulled off his boots, and finally succeeded, with the help of fire and friction, in qualifying himself for business.

"Woman," he then said, with the pompous air with which he was accustomed to impose upon his followers, "men of my stamp are never unfortunate, or, if they are, they know how to retrieve their fortunes."

The listener flushed with joy and hope at this declaration. The manner of her confederate, even, appeared to her promising, now that the warmth of the fire permitted his muscles and features their natural action.

"You have good news, then?" she exclaimed. "You have learned the whereabouts of Hester and Philip?"

Boardbush assented.

"And know what has become of the trader?"

Again the Witch Finder nodded.

"And have learned where they all are—for I suppose they are all together?"

Once more the Witch Finder moved his head affirmatively.

"And where are they? Speak!"

"They are in one of the deserted houses of Salem—the Rogers house, you know—the one that was left by will to the old corporal."

Miss Stoughton uttered an incoherent exclamation, but one signifying that the information was too good to be true.

"You can depend upon what I am telling you," added Boardbush, "for I am quite certain of its truth. I've not been on the move all night for nothing. The fugitives are all together, bear and all, in the house formerly owned by Mr. and Mistress Rogers, and the old soldier is with them."

The change these statements wrought in the aspect of the judge's niece can be imagined.

"Quick, Lettis," she commanded, "serve up your breakfast. Let us do all we can to reward Mr. Boardbush for the good news he has brought us."

The confederates were soon partaking of a tempting repast, while the old woman waited upon them.

"How fortunate we are!" suddenly exclaimed Miss Stoughton, with that easy revulsion of feelings which characterizes a shallow nature. "I can never tell you, Mr. Boardbush, how happy you make me!"

"But—but that unfortunate fact," stammered Temperance—"the fact that Philip saw me sticking the pins into myself—will not that prove a great barrier to the success of our projects?"

"Not necessarily, if we act promptly," answered Boardbush. "Thus far, in all likelihood, Philip has mentioned the fact in question to only Hester and her parents. I do not think that he has revealed even his presence to any one else, or that he intends to do so, at present!"

"And why not?"

"Because the mystery of the Harbinger stands between him and our people. Depend upon it, the ship has gone ashore, somewhere between here and Newfoundland, and the two men have come home for assistance. I say ashore, because the boat in which they arrived, had been deliberately fitted up for the voyage, and this one fact shows that the Harbinger is safe, or at least that her passengers are. Don't you see? If things were otherwise than I have suggested, this boat would not have contained two passengers only, but fifteen or twenty!"

Temperance concurred in these views.

"But, if the passengers are safe," she suggested, "may not Philip appear in our streets, going boldly about his business?"

"He would have done so, in ordinary times, but he will not on the present occasion, after all he has learned from Hester and her mother. Had he been intending to show himself to his friends and neighbours, he would have done so already. Depend upon it, he has resolved to keep hidden. It will occur to him that most of his passengers can be won over, before their arrival, to his way of thinking, with regard to this witchcraft excitement, and he will think it prudent to obtain this reinforcement before he presents himself to public notice. Depend upon it, he will secure a ship—the Western Wave, for example—and hurry back to the scene of trouble!"

Temperance saw that the logic of her companion was too clear to be disputed.

"How did the Harbinger get ashore?" she demanded.

Boardbush hesitated a moment, and then said:

"I had a friend on the ship—a man who took a berth aboard of her, at my instigation, with orders never to allow Philip to return to Salem. It seems that my agent was not smart enough to accomplish this commission, but it also appears that he has managed to retard the arrival of the ship, in accordance with a suggestion I gave him!"

"But how dared you menace Philip's life, knowing that I loved him?"

"Softly, Temperance—don't be excited. You will remember that my love for Hester is several years old, and that I have long looked upon Philip as a rival, as an enemy, as a man to be put out of the way at the first opportunity. You will also remember that my acquaintance with you is of comparatively recent date. The plot in question was concocted long before Philip sailed on his last voyage, and consequently before I had any knowledge of your love for him."

"Enough. I am not angry. Not knowing my sentiments, of course you were not obliged to respect them. As affairs are, however, at the present moment, you will never harm him?"

"Certainly not—no more than you would harm Hester, knowing that I loved her! I leave his fate entirely in your keeping, asking only that you will leave Hester's in mine!"

"It's an agreement, provided you keep her out of my sight and presence. You think, then, that she and Philip are both at the deserted house?"

"Yes, and that they will remain there until this evening. They are actually snowed in. I assured myself, in the first place, that they were not at the house of the Waybrooks, next that they were not at the old corporal's, next that they had not gone to Philip's father, next that they had not gone aboard of any of the vessels in port, or ridden away on the roads to Cape Ann or to Boston—and so on, till I had assured myself that they were yet in Salem. After that, it was easy to reduce the problem to its only legitimate conclusion, namely—that they had hidden themselves in one of the deserted houses, and that the Rogers's house is the one they have chosen. The girl knew, from your uncle, as well as from myself, that you had accused her—hence her flight. True as it is with them—hence their choice of the house of the late Mr. Rogers!"

"You reason, Boardbush, acutely!"

"You flatter me! I consent, however, to give myself a certain degree of credit."

"But you have said nothing publicly—told no one of the return of Philip and the trader?"

"Not a whisper."
"Nor I. The secret is between them and us only. Are you sure that they will remain concealed until evening?"

"Such is my firm conviction, whatever that may be worth to you. The two men will explain matters, rest and sleep, settle upon their plans, and make all their arrangements to sail this coming evening, under cover of the darkness. I think the girl and her mother will sail with them."

The eyes of Miss Stoughton brightened vividly. "Surely, knowing all this," said she, "we can hit upon a course of action that will make us triumphant?"

"Beyond a doubt," and Boardbush arose with a business-like air, having finished his breakfast. "We have only to follow the clues already in our possession. I am now going to pay a visit to the deserted house, and see if I can get any positive light with regard to its occupants. If you choose to remain here, or come here an hour hence, I will give you some news worth having."

"I will expect it then," replied Temperance. "It is about time for my uncle to get up, and Lettis and I must get his breakfast, but we will not fail to remain on the watch until we again see you."

Again the Witch FINDER vanished, hurrying away in the direction of the deserted house, with the eagerness of a bloodhound pursuing its prey. He had learned enough to render him hopeful, to endow him with a deep and joyful excitement, and to make him count upon a prompt and easy triumph.

The first object that attracted the attention of the fierce pursuer, as he reached his destination, was the notice the old corporal had pinned to the front door.

"To let!" he exclaimed, coming to a halt near the steps. "Impossible!"

He read the announcement repeatedly, with eyes big with wonder, and soon realized its nature, accepting the evidence of his senses.

"Sure enough!" he then muttered. "But it's odd—something quite opposed to my suspicion. They can't be here."

He next noticed that the snow had been cleared from the walk, that the door had been opened, and that numerous heavy footprints had been left in the path, as of persons coming and going; whereupon he listened a moment, but with no other result than that of assuring himself that a profound silence reigned throughout the dwelling. His wonder and curiosity deepened.

"Apply to T. Trueaxe, eh?" he pursued, his eyes reverting to the paper. "Good! I shall be most happy to apply to him, just to search the house, and make sure that they are not here. But where shall I find him? Not on the premises, of course."

As he spoke, he raised the latch and pushed, entirely through habit, but without any expectation that the door would yield to his touch. He was almost startled, therefore, to see it swing open promptly and freely, and thus give him admittance.

"Goodness!" he ejaculated. "How very strange! I could have sworn that they were all here!"

Stepping into the hall, he was saluted by a ray of light from the sitting-room, the door between that apartment and the hall being open.

"Thunder!" said he, hesitating to advance, but involuntarily closing the door behind him. "How very unexpected! How singular!"

The fascination of a mystery fell upon him.

"What can it mean?" he thought. "The house all open, and a candle burning! Everything so still, too! No noise whatever."

He listened a moment, and was quite startled by the silence, which was so profound that his suppressed breathing seemed to echo on every side of the apartment.

A terrible thought suddenly struck him. His red face became pallid, and his knees shook beneath him.

"They've gone! they've gone!" he shouted, bounding into the sitting-room, and glaring wildly around. "They guessed that I would find them! They've fled!"

The floor in the hall he had just traversed, snapped loudly at this juncture, and this sound, so unexpected, so ominous in the stillness, inspired the intruder with another thought, coupled with an instant terror.

"No, they are here!" he exclaimed, leaping fully two yards backward. "They're hiding! They've set a trap for me!"

(To be continued.)

ABYSSINIAN FEMALE COSTUME.—The dress is elegant, but not incompatible with a tolerably cold climate; a shirt with sleeves to the wrist, made quite loose, and descending to the ankles, of finer

or coarser cotton cloth, is the universal under garment. The richer women wear the same made of white calico, lined and embroidered rather handsomely in floss silk of various colours. This shirt, with a strip of the same material round the waist, and a similar piece loosely thrown over the shoulders, is the sole dress of the poorer females; the upper classes wear, besides, a pair of trousers when riding, which are also handsomely embroidered; and over this a cloth of the finest and lightest fabric, snow-white, or (those who can afford it) a blue silk mantle, sometimes embroidered, and sometimes lavishly ornamented with silver-gilt bosses and drops. This is worn when abroad, and the face is then closely covered with the mantle or cloth, so that nothing but the eyes can be seen. The poorer and even middling classes have no concealment, and visit or receive visits freely. For ornament they wear half a dozen silver chains round the neck, also silver ornaments of various shapes, supposed to contain charms against sorcerers and disease, silver rings on their fingers, and other silver drops of an oblong form round the ankles, that rattle when they move, a pair of very small earrings, just visible, and occasionally a long hair pin in the plaits of the hair, which is useful as well as ornamental. The hair is plaited in various forms by all classes, though on the death of a relation they shave the head, and fresh butter is profusely used, mixed with oil of cloves, sandalwood, or other scents. Flowers, that in all nations more or less charm the female sex, are at a complete discount in Abyssinia. The fingers and toes, which in many are small and elegant, are dyed in a root called *inacolla*, that produces the same rose tinge as the henna of the East, and then the Abyssinian beauty is complete.—*Travels in Abyssinia.*

SCIENCE.

THE atmosphere absorbs nearly 40 per cent. of the heat of the sun's rays.

ASTRONOMERS tell us that the moon is drawing gradually nearer to the earth by about an inch every year. They have also discovered that the day is about one-hundredth of a second longer now than it was 2,000 years ago.

POUTLEY has made observations with a pyrheliometer, from which he estimates that the amount of heat annually received by the earth from the sun would melt a crust of ice surrounding the earth 101 feet thick.

A COMET.—An observer, writing from Freshwater, Isle of Wight, says:—"A very splendid star—probably a comet—is at this moment visible in the heavens. Although the sun is intensely bright and powerful, the star or comet shines with a diamond-like brilliancy. Its size to the naked eye is about that of a star of the second magnitude, its altitude as near as possible 75 degrees S.E. by S."

A NEW PLANET.—Dr. E. H. F. Peters writes that a new planet belonging to the group of the asteroids, and the 98th of them, was discovered at the Litchfield Observatory of Hamilton College, in 11 hours, 17 minutes, 51 seconds of right ascension, and 1 degree, 38 minutes, 18 seconds of southern declination. It has the brightness of a star of the twelfth magnitude, with a slow retrograde motion, about 22 seconds of time per day, in right ascension, and a motion of six minutes towards the south.

INSECT FABRICATORS OF IRON.—It is well known that some insects are skillful spinners, but it was not known that some of them fabricated iron. A Swedish naturalist, M. de Sjogreen, has published a curious memoir on this subject. The insects in question are almost microscopic; they live beneath certain trees, especially in the province of Smaland, and they spin, like silk-worms, a kind of ferruginous cocoons, which constitute the mineral known under the name of "lake ore," and which is composed of from 20 to 60 per cent. of oxide of iron mixed with oxide of manganese, 10 per cent. of chloric, and some centimetres of phosphoric acid. The deposits of this mineral may be 200 metres long, from 5 to 10 metres wide, and from 8 to 30 inches thick.

FORTIFICATIONS AT PORTSMOUTH.—A plan, it appears, was propounded for building a fort at the south-western corner of Hayling Island, within about 400 yards of Fort Cumberland, at an estimated expense of 240,000*l.* It is now stated that the Government have decided upon building a fort at the south-east corner of Hayling Island, which, instead of 400 yards, is four miles exactly from Fort Cumberland, and which will thoroughly protect Chichester Harbour, in which a vessel of war can ride. This harbour is well known to all the naval authorities at Portsmouth as the back door, and the only back door, to all the forts and magazines in the rear of Portsmouth. Why this door should have remained open

so long when millions of money have been spent, and are being spent, upon the construction of these forts and magazines, it is hard to imagine; but, at all events, closing it, and, at the same time, securing a most admirable parade and exercising ground, attached to, and connecting, what we suppose will be called South Hayling Fort, and Fort Cumberland, will be a boon for which the army and navy and the country at large cannot be too grateful, particularly as, we are informed, upwards of 100,000*l.* will be saved by the arrangement. Both services will be very materially benefited, the army especially, because there is no parade ground at Portsmouth worth calling by that name, with the exception of Southsea Common; and even that, on any but very fine days, is useless, in consequence of its being a swamp, while the proposed new parade and exercising ground at Hayling, having a substratum of gravel, will be at all times available, as it is perfectly dry, and fit for use within half an hour after the heaviest rains. Added to this, the whole of the foreshore rights for four miles will become the property of the Government, as well as the ferry at Olmah, which acquisition may be considered as no small element in the transaction. At all events the Government will have secured a very fine shooting ground four miles in extent, a site on which to build a fort, which is an absolute necessity, valuable and important foreshore rights, as well as a freehold ferry connecting the district with Fort Cumberland, and in effecting this will have saved the country upwards of 100,000*l.* The question is now all the more interesting from the fact that Sir John Pakington has nominated a committee, consisting of distinguished officers, to inquire into the state of our national defences.

LAMPLIGHTING BY CLOCKWORK.

AN ingenious apparatus for turning on and off the gas in street or other gas lamps was described by Mr. Stephen Tucker in a paper read at the Society of Arts on the 18th of May, "On the various methods of lighting streets by gas, with proposals for the introduction of an improved system." The apparatus, said Mr. Tucker, aims at three objects of improvement—to abolish the genus lamplighter, to simultaneously light and extinguish the lamps, and to economize gas.

The basis of this invention is the American clock. The central spindle of an eight-day clock revolves once an hour, and has two arms inserted to gear with 48 teeth on an independent plate, which therefore makes its revolution in 24 hours. Of these 48 teeth half are inserted on the upper and half on the under surface of the plate, and so have more liberty to bear upon the arms of the spindle. This independent plate has 96 cogs in its circumference, and its retrogression is thus prevented every quarter of an hour by a small spring-stop, to avoid strain on the mainspring. In this 96-cogged plate is inserted a spindle, connected with the outer or dial-plate, which has two arms, one fixed, one movable. This movable or adjusting arm is for regulating the hour at which the gas should be lighted or put out, according to the time of year. The dial-plate, of course, revolves also once in twenty-four hours, and at the proper time the arm presses one side of the double cam fixed to the tap in the vertical gas-pipe. On each side of the tap, and connecting, as it were, the perforations, is a small groove, through which, when the light is turned off, sufficient gas escapes to supply a small blue flame, which continues—though invisible—during the day-time. The cam being pressed turns the tap, and reduces the light to this blue flame; and on the other arm coming round and in contact with the cam, it lowers the guard, turns on the gas at full, and in effect lights the lamp. The guard (the sole object of which is to protect and hide the small daylight flame) has perforations for air at the bottom, and is connected by a tube with the plate on which the loops of the cam are.

One of these patent apparatus has been tried by Lord John Manners's orders in an outer passage of Somerset House; and another by order of the Master of the Mint, Professor Graham, over the porter's lodge at the Mint. These seem to have required amendment, as they were not strictly regular in the time of illumination. Some obvious objections to the practical and dependable use of the invention in street-lighting were started in the discussion which followed the reading of the paper.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES AT ROME.—The excavations now being made, by the munificence of the Pope, are proceeding with most interesting historical results, and bringing to light a large number of the ancient master-pieces of art, with which the Holy City was once embellished. Two flights of steps, which led from the river, have been cleared, and two passages have been discovered which give direct access to the interior of the adjoining market. At the depot of marbles, on the banks of the Tiber, was found a large staircase, with sculptured ornaments,

in a position exactly corresponding with the anticipations of the learned director of the works. Up to the present time there have been found 111 blocks of African marble, 240 of antique yellow, and as many of serpentine. Other varieties are met with in smaller quantities, as antique red, and green, broccio, and even chalcidony. At Ostia, where the researches are being made by a commission of antiquaries, some remarkable monuments have been found, throwing a new light on the worship of Cybele in that place; amongst other things there is a series of votive offerings on the ground consecrated to that goddess. In the same place were discovered the remains of a temple, designed for initiatory ceremonies, and which forms an edifice quite unique of its kind; also a house very elegantly decorated, on the walls of which was a fresco, representing a festival sacred to Diana. This painting is of extreme delicacy of execution.

EXPERIMENTS WITH PALLISER SHOT.

A SERIES of experiments have been carried out at Shoeburyness to test the suitability of the royal dockyard ballast iron, known as "Seely's pigs" for the manufacture of Palliser chilled projectiles. The following projectiles made by Sir W. Armstrong and Co. were supplied and fired from a 7 in. rifled muzzle-loading 7-ton gun against service Palliser shot and shell at a 10 in. solid rolled plate, manufactured by Sir John Brown and Co., the gun at seventy yards, and the charges 22 lb. l.g.r. powder, viz.:—7 in. shot and shell, marked C, of ballast iron entirely; shot and shell, marked R, made of equal proportions of ballast and Redsdale iron; and shot and shell, marked BR, formed of unequal proportions of ballast and Redsdale iron. Round 1.—C shot, weight 113 lb., ogival head of 1.25 diameters; struck near proper right upper corner, about 17 in. away from proper right end. A notch of 18 in. along the top edge and 8 in. down the face of the plate, and extending $\frac{1}{2}$ of the thickness was knocked out; the remaining back part badly fractured with two cracks extending through to the rear, over a length of 7 in., and with a gap of one inch. Penetration of shot 84 in. The hit was near a bolt-hole, but at the same time was directly over one of the buttresses of 5 in. wide, 16 in. deep iron planks supporting the target. Round 2.—Palliser service cored shot, weight 113 lb., with ogival head of 1.25 diameter; struck 19 in. from proper right end, and 23 in. from base; head of shot remaining in hole, but driven out by No. 3 round, when the penetration was measured at 84 in. Plate bulged in rear about an inch and fissured. Round 3.—Palliser service shell filled with sand to weight of 114 lb. 6 oz., with 1.5 ogival head; struck 3 ft. 11 in. from right end, and 6 in. from top edge, which was driven up an inch over 14 in.; shot-hole 94 in. by 10 in., just joining bolt-hole; head of shot sticking in the plate, but dropped out at sixth round; penetration, 5.85 in.; bulge at rear $\frac{1}{2}$ in., and a crack of over 3 in. long. Round 4.—C shell filled with sand to weight of 114 lb. 6 oz., head 1.5 d.; struck under No. 3 round, 2 ft. 10 in. from right end, and 14 in. from base; ripple clean, without any crack; head of shell rebounded to the front; slight bulge in rear, no cracks. Round 5.—R shot, weight 114 lb. 8 oz., head 1.25 d.; struck about 6 ft. from proper right end, and 12 in. from top edge, which was bulged a quarter of an inch; head of shot sticking in the plate; ripple broken off, and edge of shot-hole broken through for about two inches into a bolt-hole. Back of plate supported by an iron plank buttress, bulged half an inch; no cracks. Round 6.—R shell filled with sand to weight of 116 lb. 8 oz., head 1.5 d.; struck about 6 ft. from right end, and 17 in. from base; ripple lip broken off; shot head rebounded out of shot-hole to the front; penetration 6.65 in. Plate against an iron plank buttress, but bulged at rear $\frac{1}{2}$ in.; no fissures behind nor in front. Round 7.—B R shot, weight 113 lb., head 1.25 d.; struck 8 ft. 8 in. from right end and 11 in. from top edge, which was bulged up about an inch over 11 in.; and a crack made from shot-hole 3 in. long; head of shot rebounded to the front; penetration, 8.35 in. In rear large bulge of 14 in. outwards, and plate cracked with fissure of over 4 in. Round 8.—B R shell, filled with sand to weight of 114 lb. 6 oz., head 1.5 d.; struck under No. 7, and 14 in. from base; clean ripple all round the hole; head of shell rebounded to the front; penetration 8.4 in. Plate bulged and badly cracked behind. Round 9.—C shot (in repetition of first round); weight 112 lb.; head, 1.25 d.; struck in fair place farther to the left of the plate, the head of the shot rebounding to the front; penetration, 8 in.; ripple lip without fissures. Plate bulged behind into a dome two inches high, and some 18 in. across, the round being nearly cracked out. From the above details there would seem to be a small percentage in favour of the superior qualities of the service-chilled shot. The penetration was in some cases remarkable for projectiles of this diameter. The plate forming the target—one that had been tested

at Portsmouth—is 19 ft. long, 3 ft. 6 in. wide, and weighs about 12 tons. The elevation of gun with which the practice was made was from ten to fifteen minutes, with an allowance for deflection of from three to ten minutes right.

A RAILWAY TRAIN, at the average speed of thirty miles in an hour, continuously maintained, would arrive at the moon in eleven months, but would not reach the sun in less than 352 years; so that if such a train had been started in the year 1516, the seventh year of the reign of King Henry VII., it would reach the sun in 1868. When arrived, it would be rather more than a year and a-half in reaching the sun's centre, three years and a quarter in passing through the sun, supposing it was tunneled through, and ten years and one-eighth in going round it. How great these dimensions are may be conceived from the statement that the same train would attain the centre of the earth in five days and a-half, pass through it in eleven days, and go round it in thirty-seven days.

EVERY square yard of the sun's surface is reckoned to give out hourly more heat than would be got by burning six tons of coal; so that if the sun were a great coal he would burn down at the rate of seven yards an hour in order to give out his present degree of heat. In a year he would burn down thirty-five miles, and in 4,000 years he would be reduced to dust and ashes. It is not likely, therefore, that the sun's heat is kept up by the burning of his own substance. Another theory supposes that a perpetual shower of meteoric stones are falling on his surface with such immense velocity (390 miles a second) that heat is given out by their passage through the solar atmosphere, and it is calculated that a stone-fall of 144 in. per annum would keep up the required temperature. If this be true, the sun is growing bigger, and gaining a mile in diameter every fifty years. Under such conditions his surface can scarcely be called a desirable place of abode, though possibly to a pachydermatous race of giants ten miles high, these stone showers may only appear a slight annoyance, scarcely deserving the expansion of an umbrella.

FACETIÆ.

A CONFECTIONER advertises broken hearts for threepence a pound.

AN exchange tells us of a man whose memory is so short that it only reaches to his knees, and consequently never pays for his boots.

"Tom, stand out of the way of that gentleman." "How do you know he is a gentleman?" "Because he has on striped trousers."

WHAT is the colour of a suit of Chancery? Does the man who weighs his words use scales? If you "cut" an acquaintance, are you liable for assault?

A JEWELLER advertises that he has some precious stones for disposal, adding that they sparkle like the tears of a young widow.

NOTHING is easier than to become rich. We annex the recipe:—Every time you spend a crown earn ten shillings.

EVILS OF MAKING LOVE.

"I say, master," said one man to another, "how came your eyes so crooked?"

"My eyes?"

"Yes."

"Why, by sitting between two girls and trying to make love to both at the same time."

THE old lady who used to dry her clothes on the equinoctial line has gone to Greenland to get the North Pole to draw water with.

AN OLD MAID'S OPINION.—All we can say of the best young men is, that they make good resolutions which they never keep, and are full of faults which they are always regretting.

AN ingenious mind has invented a sheep-shearing machine, to which the animal under operation supplies the motive power. We soon shall have mutton roasting itself and walking on to the table.

A YOUNG Irish student at the Veterinary College being asked: "If a broken-winded horse was brought to him for cure, what he would advise?" promptly replied, "To sell him as soon as possible!"

A VERY fat lady, on getting into an omnibus, heard a gentleman make the grumbling remark, "Omnibuses were not made for elephants." To this she replied, "Sir, omnibuses are like Noah's Ark, intended to carry all sorts of beasts."

A YOUNG man, who received but 50*l.* a year salary, recently wrote from London to his unsophisticated country parent for assistance, and sent his photograph. The father replied indignantly, "Rascal of

a son, you cannot be as poor as you stated, for in your photograph you are surrounded by vases, rich curtains, statues, and cascades in perspective. Not a shilling from your affectionate father." Not to be done.

A CELEBRATED lawyer once said that the three most troublesome clients he ever had were a young lady who wanted to be married, a married woman who wanted a divorce, and an old maid who didn't know what she wanted.

MRS. GAMBOGE wishes when the young men call on her daughters they would know the hour of ten, and respect it. Her lamented Gamboge always took his hat at ten. "Young men nowadays," says Mrs. G., "don't understand the gas and fuel questions." We suppose they want to.

THE GYMNASIUM ALLEY.

AN incident recently occurred at Oxford, which we think goes very far to establish as a fact that "the world moves." An Oxford alumnus of twenty years standing recently returned, after a long absence, to visit his *alma mater*, and was very courteously received and "shown round" by Professor T—. After having exhibited to his guest most of the modern improvements, the professor said to him:

"You have now seen, I believe, all that is new in the institution, except the gymnasium. Come, let's go up there, and I will roll a string of tenpins with you."

"What, sir!" exclaimed the guest, starting back in real or simulated astonishment.

"Why," exclaimed the professor, "we have a fine alley in our gymnasium, and I would like to go there and roll a string of tenpins with you, sir!"

"Tenpins!" cried the alumnus, with a gleam of malicious fun in his eye; "why, sir, I was expelled from the college for rolling tenpins!"

USEFUL ADVICE.—A transcendental preacher took for his text—"Feed my lambs." A plain farmer very quaintly remarked to him on coming out of the church: "A very good text, sir; but you should take care not to put the hay so high in the rack that the lambs can't reach it."

A PETITE blue-eyed maiden, who was nursing her fifth Christmas doll, and listening to her mother and some female friends talking about domestic broils and divorces, created rather a sensation by remarking, "Well, ma, I'm never going to marry! I'm going to be a widow."

RURAL SIMPLICITY.

A little girl of six years of age, on a visit to London, and fresh from the woods and wilds, was one day asked by her aunt:

"How she liked the country?"

"Oh, ma'am," replied the girl, looking at her questioner full in the face—"Oh, ma'am, I'd like the country very well if it was only in London."

ANANIAS B. KNOTT has obtained a divorce from his wife, in St. Louis, on the ground of "cruel and abusive treatment." He was Knott, her husband, and she was Knott, his wife. Now she is not; that is to say, she is not Knott, and he is divorced, still he is Knott. Why not?

Two friends were dining together, one of whom remarked, "As I was going abroad I have made my will, and have bequeathed to you my whole stock of impudence." The other replied, "You are generous as well as kind; you have bequeathed to me by far the largest portion of your estate."

THE PROP OF A HOUSE.

Old Maid: "Oh dear, Clara, how beautifully this author writes, he calls a wife 'the prop of a house; wouldn't you like to prop a house, my dear?"

Clara: "I would prefer, aunt, to 'prop-a-gate.'"

A GENTLEMAN, who last week stayed out very late, on his tardy arrival at his domicile was thus accosted by his anxious spouse:—"Why, my dear, I was afraid you had spoken?"—"Spoken, my love! What do you mean?"—"Well," was the rejoinder, "it would have been ungrammatical to say that I was afraid you had Spoked."

CHINESE SERVANTS.—Bishop Simpson, in a recent lecture, predicted that in a very few years, we would have Chinese servants in our houses. Paterfamilias referred to this at the breakfast-table this morning, when little Minnie, after awhile, came to his chair and whispered, "Oh, pa, won't it be nice? We shall have a Chinese servant, and she will eat all the rats, so we won't have to keep a cat."

A QUACK, having invented a wonderful hair invigorating fluid, applied to a medical gentleman for a testimonial. He gave it in these terms—calculated, we should think, to convince the most sceptical: "A little applied to the instand has given it a coat of bristles, making a splendid pen-wiper at little cost. We applied the lather to a twopenny nail, and the nail is now the handsomest lather-brush you ever

saw, with a beautiful soft hair growing from the end of it, some five or six feet in length. Applied to door-stones, it does away with the use of the mat; applied to a door, it will cause to grow therefrom hair sufficient for a Brussels carpet. A little weak lather sprinkled over a barn, makes it impervious to wind, rain, or cold. It is good to put inside of children's cradles, sprinkle on the roadsides, or anywhere where luxurious grass is wanted for use or ornament. It produces the effect in ten minutes!"

BOLTED.

A landlord, recently going round to collect his rents, sent his servant ahead to prepare his tenants for the visit. On reaching the first house, and seeing his servant taking a survey, apparently in vain endeavouring to gain admittance, he inquired: "What is the matter, John? Is the door bolted?" "I don't know, sir," replied John, "but the tenant evidently has."

ANYTHING FOR A CHANGE.

Small Child (to Benevolent-looking Passer-by): "Oh, sir, please sir, could you give us two fardens for a penny?"—*Fun.*

A HOLIDAY TASK.

Old Gardener: "Well, Master Johnnie, and what are you doing?"

Johnnie: "Why, you see, Martin, Pa said last night that Latin and Greek are dead languages—so I'm going to bury them."—*Fun.*

THE GIFT HORSE.

Page: "Master's compliments, sir, and he's sent you a haunch of old Dobbin; you've sat behind him so often he thought you might like it."—*Fun.*

SPECIAL FROM ABYSSINIA.—When Sir Robert Napier found that Colonel Phayre's enterprise in approaching Magdala had a brilliant result, although not exactly in obedience to orders, he is reported to have said that he might go farther and Phayre worse.—*Punch.*

ALARMING!

George (late Comic Bachelor): "What do you think the man wanted, my dear? (A visitor had called during breakfast.) He came to take my life!"

Affectionate Wife (rushing at him): "Go, go!"

George: "I mean, my love, in the Imperial Adamantine Assurance Office, that your life's been bothering about ever since we were married!"

(Didn't he "catch it!")—*Punch.*

WOMEN'S RIGHTS WITH A VENGEANCE!—A Bill laid before Parliament by a number of gentlemen, including Mr. Mill, the Philosopher, for legalising female rights, provides, amongst other things, that wives shall be capable of "contracting, suing, and being sued, as if they were unmarried women." Suing and being sued! Wives to have suitors as though they were spinsters still? Oh, Mr. Mill!—*Punch.*

LAST NEW THING IN SKIRTS.

Aunt (slightly shocked): "Why, child, all your clothes are falling off!"

Laura: "Oh, dear, no, Aunt; it's the Fashion!"—*Punch.*

SERGEANT ARMSTRONG appears to think that he is a big gun, whereas he is only a small bore.—*Tomahawk.*

THE WILL AND THE WAY.

The following is an instance of the ingenious way in which, whilst the commands of royalty are obeyed, the claims of propriety are not sacrificed. A contemporary states that,

"It is said that at one of the recent Drawing Rooms Her Majesty desired the Lord Chamberlain to inform one of the ladies present that she was requested not to appear again in so low a dress."

This must have been a terrible order to the fair and modest delinquent. With what rage and disappointment must she have consulted with her dressmaker how the cruel and ridiculous "request" could be evaded. But there was little need for dismay. A delightful *arrivée pensée* suggests itself. What is taken away in one part, must be given in another. There is an easy way of getting out of the difficulty—you shall not be decent, my dear Madame, against your wish; you walk backwards from Her Majesty—*à bien*—you shall be content with your new dress. And so the same paragraph tells us,

"It seems the fashion with French dressmakers now to scoop out the back of low dresses in a most unseemly manner."

Perhaps, though this may not come to Her Majesty's eyes, it may to her ears, and, if so, may lead to a compulsory reform in the present crab-like movements at the Drawing Rooms.—*Tomahawk.*

THE NEW HOUSE OF COMMONS.—A new House of Commons is to be built at a cost of 120,000*l.*

That, at least, is the recommendation of Mr. Headlam's committee. The money will be wasted. For all practical purposes the present House is quite good enough, and large enough too. On very special occasions, perhaps half-a-dozen times in a year, there is a crush, and members may be put to some inconvenience. But ordinarily there is no need for any larger House. It is one in which anybody who cares to speak up may be quite sure of being heard, and it supplies all possible comforts for the representatives of the people. The Government will surely not act on the report of the committee. If they do, and the majority agree to the proposal, the present House will be restored to its original proportions by removing the present ceiling, and will form a lobby to the new building. Of course, until the latter is completed, the sittings will be held in the present hall.

A SIXTY YEARS' COURTSHIP.—A marriage has recently been solemnized at Mark between an old gentleman (a widower) of 80 and a widow of 78. The circumstances are very peculiar. In 1812, the old lady now married gave birth to a daughter. At that time her present husband promised her marriage. About the year 1818 she gave birth to two more daughters, and an action was then commenced for breach of promise, and resulted in the defendant's being imprisoned in Holbeath gaol for several months. At length the matter was compromised. After this the two parties separated, married, each having a large family, who are all living in foreign countries and doing well. About nine years ago they became widow and widower, and from that time up to the present the latter has been paying his constant addresses to the former, and at last he has made her his happy partner in life after a courtship ("off and on") of over sixty years.

THE BARON AND THE POET.

(From the German.)

I ENVY you, my Baron bold,
Poor devil! your title grand,
Your pedigree renowned and old,
Your castle gray, and leagues of land,
Your splendid parks, and private grounds,
Your horses, and your gun and hounds.

And you, I hear, my noble lord,
You envy me—poor devil me!
The genius heaven did not accord
To you, to match your pedigree;
But making you a peer, assigned
To me the nobler rank of mind.

Let's be content, my Baron bold,
Nor each the other's fortune crave;
Enjoy your title, lands and gold,
And leave to me what Nature gave;
Keep you the gifts your rank has won,
And I will be my mother's son!

J. J. S.

STATISTICS.

THE following statement has been submitted to the Metropolitan Board of Works of the moneys which are required for the completion of the works now in process. New street from Blackfriars to the Mansion House: Compensations, &c., 227,000*l.*; engineering works, 56,000*l.* North and south embankments: Compensations, &c., 250,000*l.*; engineering works, 790,000*l.* Additional works: Park-lane improvement, 125,000*l.*; Chelsea embankment, 286,000*l.*; Thames embankment approaches, 280,000*l.*—Total, 2,026,000*l.*; Deduct cash balance, loan, and payment from St Thomas's Hospital, 244,759*l.* Net amount, 2,026,241*l.* The estimated amount to be received from sale of land: Thames embankment, north, 76,250*l.*; southern embankments, 81,612*l.*; new street to Mansion House, 2,007,862*l.*

POPULATION OF EGYPT.—According to the census taken last year, the inhabitants of Egypt are 4,911,619. Amongst these are half a million of Copts, descendants of the ancient inhabitants of the country; 400,000 Bedouins; 250,000 Europeans and Syrians; and 500,000 Turks. In Alexandria, at the close of the last century, scarcely 40,000 inhabitants were counted, whereas, at the present time, that city contains 200,000, about half of whom are Arabs and the other half Europeans. The nationality of the latter is ascertained to be as follows:—Greeks, 25,000; Italians, 18,000; French, 16,000; Anglo-Maltese, 13,000; Syrians and natives of the Levant, 12,000; Germans and Swiss, 10,000; people of various other nations, 6,000. Cairo, the capital, contains upwards of 400,000 inhabitants. Within its walls are 140 schools, more than 400 mosques, 1,166 cafés, 65 public baths, and 11 bazaars. The other towns of importance, as regards their population, are—in Lower Egypt, Dalmietta, 45,000; Rosetta, 20,000; and in

Upper Egypt, Syout, on the left bank of the Nile, numbering 20,000 souls. The amount of commerce with France was, in 1866, as much as 80,665,172 francs of imports, and 83,810,114 francs of exports.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

GILT ORNAMENTS.—The best way to prevent gold and gilt ornaments from tarnishing, and to make them bright, is to keep them in box-wood sawdust, which may be obtained at any good ivory-turners, such as Jacques, in Hatton Garden. To clean them, wash them in a lather; rinse off the soap, and let them drain on a cloth. When nearly dry, put them into the box-wood sawdust.

SILVERING HOOKS AND EYES.—A patent has been granted in Bavaria, for the following method of silvering hooks and eyes made of iron wire. The articles are suspended in dilute sulphuric acid until the iron shows a clean, bright surface. After rinsing in pure water, they are placed in a bath of a mixed solution of sulphate of zinc, sulphate of copper and cyanide of potassium, and here remain until they receive a bright coating of brass. Lastly, they are transferred to a bath of nitrate of silver, cyanide of potassium and sulphate of soda, in which they quickly receive a coating of silver.

GLYCERINE AND YOLK OF EGGS.—Four parts, by weight, of yolk of eggs rubbed in a mortar with five parts of glycerine, gives a preparation of great value as an unguent for application to broken surfaces of the skin of all kinds. The compound has a horny-like consistency, in unctuous-like fatty substances, but over which it has the advantage of being quickly removed by water. It is unalterable, a specimen having been exposed to the air for three years unchanged. Applied to the skin it forms a varnish which effectually excludes the air, and prevents its irritating effects. These properties render it serviceable for erysipelas and cutaneous affections, of which it allays the action.

MISCELLANEOUS.

TEN thousand rupees have been placed at the disposal of the conservator of the port at Cochin for the protection of the town from the encroachments of the sea.

In the estimates for the year an item of 1,150*l.* is charged for "dusting and cleansing the House of Commons." There is a deal of dust kicked up during the Session.

MR. CAVENDISH, on Civil Service Estimates, will move, "That a humble address be presented to her Majesty praying that she will be graciously pleased to direct that a statue of Oliver Cromwell be placed in her palace at Westminster."

It is worthy of note that France has been receiving increased quantities of arms from Belgium this year. In the first two months of 1868 the value of the arms sent to Belgium from France was 38,324*l.* as compared with 23,143*l.* in the corresponding period of 1867.

A PLASTER cast of the statue designed by Baron Marochetti for the Albert memorial in Hyde Park was lately put into its position in order to judge of the effect it would produce. The result was so unsatisfactory that the statue has been condemned as being unworthy of the shrine prepared to receive it.

THE date of the Royal visits to Ireland since the time of William III. are as follows: King George IV. was in Ireland once, from the 12th of August to the 3rd of September, 1821; and the Queen Victoria three times—in 1849, from the 3rd to the 10th of August; in 1853, from the 29th of August to the 3rd of September; and in 1861, from the 22nd to the 30th of August.

A VIOLENT shock of earthquake was felt recently at Tachkent in Russia. It lasted nearly a minute, the direction being from south-west to north-east. All the buildings were shaken, and most of them seriously damaged. Nine men, four women, and two children were killed by the fall of houses, and six other persons slightly injured. The estimate of the loss incurred is about 12,000 roubles (4*l.* each). Another shock occurred on the 8th.

THE HOUSE OF BEAUFORT AND THE GARTER.—The Garter has been worn by every Duke of Beaufort except the third and fourth, who, living in the time of George I. and II., found themselves excluded, on account of their staunch Toryism, from every dignity or office of honour and emolument in the gift of the crown. With the reign of George III. the principles the family had upheld through evil report and good report became again in the ascendant.

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BOOKS RECEIVED.

The Philosophy of Life and Death. By JOHN BROOKES. (F. R. H. M.) A little work taking a religious view of nature, and the state of mankind, present and past. It embodies some what of Swedenborg's principles, although in a modified form. It is interestingly written, and contains many sentiments and passages which, if not altogether remarkable for originality, will bear repetition, and is calculated to improve the minds of its readers.

Crime and Criminal Offenders, in connection with Popular Education and Morals. By SAMUEL RICHARDSON. (Jarrold & Sons.) An essay, as its title implies, taking a broad view of crime, morality, and education of the present day. It contains much statistical and general information upon these subjects, and strongly advocates "the employment of education as a means to prevent crime, rather than a remedy for those who commit it."

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. S. P.—Used postage stamps are of no value, so we cannot point out a market for them.

A CONY—If it is neither illegal nor improper for cousins to become united in the holy bonds of matrimony.

W. Z. A.—One shilling and sixpence or two shillings, we forget which. Write to Stationers' Hall, Stationers' Hall Court, London, E.C.

HARK FOOT.—The Messrs. Routledge publish "Athletic Sports and Recreations," by the Rev. J. G. Wood, with illustrations. The price is two shillings.

F. B.—Saddles were first used in England about the year 600. Side-saddles for ladies were introduced by Anne, Queen of Richard II., in 1338.

S. B.—Good was tried for the murder at Southampton on the 13th of May, 1842; and Oorvolsier, for the murder of Lord William Russell, on the 18th of June, 1840.

A SUBSCRIBER.—The tale you name has not as yet been published in book form. You can, however, obtain the numbers containing it, by application at the office of THE LONDON READER.

H. J.—The Royal Military College at Sandhurst, and the Military Academy at Woolwich, are the principal military schools in Great Britain; the latter is for engineer and artillery cadets.

A CONSTANT READER.—We thank this correspondent for the eulogy expressed in favour of the popular story named. A new work is now in preparation by the same author, and will shortly be published in THE LONDON READER.

BRIDGET ROWAN.—1. Colour of air, golden, and light brown. 2. Handwriting much too sloping to be distinct; write more slowly, and be careful in the formation of the letters.

BRIGHTON.—Your handwriting is good, but open to improvement, especially if intending to fill the position of a nursery governess; for the first lessons imparted to children are of far more importance than any after tuition.

F. BRIDGES.—Birds seized with cramp should be immediately wrapped in flannel, and kept near a fire for some time; be careful that their cages do not hang in a draught; insolation in this particular frequently causes it.

HARRY.—There are several guide books to the Civil Service; any bookseller will supply you with "White's Guide to the Civil Service." The price is 2s. 6d., and it is published by Messrs. Warner & Co.

HERMIO.—Take our advice, place no faith in advertisements of the kind you name; they are in fact traps set to catch the unwary, by swindlers; indeed, they have been frequently exposed in the public police courts.

ELLIS.—A bliscuit bag may be made with either a clean bullock's bladder, or a piece of cloth; the bag terminates in a tin funnel, according to the size required; the bliscuit mixture is put into this bag, and forced through the funnel.

J. M.—Take equal parts of vermilion and Spanish brown, make thin with a little linseed oil and turpentine; this will produce the dye you require; the proportion of Spanish brown must be according to the fineness of shade wanted.

PORTLY.—"Forgiveness," by R., "To the English Girl," by G., "Lina," by W. H. B.; we regret to say we are so far from attaining our standard, that we are compelled to decline them; future attempts, however, may prove more successful.

VICTOR.—The first Savings' Bank was instituted at Bern, in Switzerland, 1787, by the name of *Caisse de Domestiques*, being intended for servants only; another was set up in Basel, 1792, open to all depositors. The Rev. Joseph Smith, of Wendeor, began a benevolent institution in 1799, and in

1803-4 a charitable bank was instituted at Tottenham by a Miss Priscilla Wakefield, and one was opened in Edinburgh in 1814. The benefit clubs among artisans having accumulated stocks of money for their progressive purposes, a plan was adopted to identify these funds with the public debt of the country, and an extra rate of interest was held out as an inducement; hence were formed savings' banks to receive small sums returnable with interest on demand. Post Office Savings' Banks were established in 1861.

W. D.—You are perfectly eligible; make a personal application to the Chief Commissioner, Scotland Yard, taking with you written testimonials as to character; if you can obtain a recommendation from any person of position, all the better.

RALPH.—The wood called rosewood derives its name from its fragrance. It was first introduced into England from the Isle of Cyprus, but the greatest supply now comes from Brazil; the more distinct the darker parts are, from the purple red which forms the ground, the more it is esteemed.

AMY.—There are but three ways for a man to revenge himself for the censure of the world: to despise it, to return the like, or to endeavour to live so as to avoid it. The first of these is usually pretended, the general practice is the second, the last is the best.

POLLY JACKSON.—A pupil teacher in a National School would, of course, be expected to attend church on a Sunday. Should she desire otherwise, she would be singularly unfit for her position; compulsion, however, is out of the question, although expulsion should be the penalty of her refusal.

G. BELL.—The large city was Rome, and the noble Roman leaped, mounted and completely armed, into the abyss, in the superstitious belief that by so doing he would save his native city from impending destruction. Sacrifices to the gods were common among all Pagan nations.

A LETTER CARRIER.—To clean cloth, dissolve 1 oz. of pearl ash in a pint of spring water, add to the solution a lemon cut in small slices; this being properly mixed and kept warm for two days, must then be strained, and the clear liquid kept in a bottle for use. This must be well rubbed into the cloth with a clean sponge, or piece of linen, and the cloth afterwards rinsed in clean water.

FORGET MEY.

The silent, sad, and solemn night
Succeeds the sunny day,
As surely as the dawning light
Dispels the shadows gray.
Forget not, then, thy lamp to trim
While golden still thy sky;
Lest suddenly thy sun go down
Ere yet thy noon is high.
And, gentle friend, forgetting not
A mother's tender cares,
A father's kind and anxious thought,
And all the fervent prayers
That gladly would have shielded thee
From toils and cares, and tears,
Yield to the Giver of all good
The love of coming years!

R. S.

FRANK.—Pepsine is prepared from rennet-bags (the stomachs of ruminating animals) carefully washed, and the mucous membrane removed by scraping, then digested during twenty-four hours in distilled water and filtered; a solution of acetate of lead is then passed through the solution, and the precipitate washed with sulphuretted hydrogen, filtered and dried; a few grains, thus prepared, will form a dose to be taken before and after meals.

C. D.—Articles of War are certain rules and regulations for the better government of the army in the dominions of the Sovereign of Great Britain and Ireland. They may be altered and enlarged at the pleasure of the Sovereign, but must be annually confirmed by Parliament under the Mutiny Act. A recruit or soldier is not liable to be tried by a military tribunal, unless it can be proved that the Articles of War have been daily read to him.

ASHLEY.—Preston-Park, near Edinburgh, was the scene of a battle between the Young Pretender, Prince Charles Stuart, and his Scotch adherents, and the Royal Army, under Sir John Cope, 1745. The latter was defeated with the loss of 500 men, and was compelled to flee at the very first onset. Sir John Cope precipitately galloped from the field of battle to Berwick-upon-Tweed, where he was the first to announce his own discomfiture. His disgrace is perpetuated by a favourite Scottish ballad, called "Johnnie Cope."

G. L. U. V.—A poor person desirous of suing for a divorce in *forma pauperis*, must first obtain the opinion of a counsel that there are reasonable grounds for a divorce, and must then apply to the Judge of the Divorce Court, producing counsel's opinion, and an affidavit as to all the material facts, and that the applicant is not worth 20s. beyond wearing apparel, after payment of debts; the judge will then assign attorney and counsel, and order the suit to proceed, the person so suing being exempt from all fees, whether successful or not.

A CONSTANT READER.—Although offered office both by Lord Russell and Lord Palmerston, the late Richard Cobden declined a seat in the Ministry. For his services as British Plenipotentiary, in which capacity, in conjunction with Lord Cowley, the British Ambassador at Paris, he arranged the commercial treaty with the French Government, Lord Palmerston offered the late eminent composer a Baronetcy and a seat at the Privy Council, but both honours were declined, as also a public grant of money at his death, by his widow, Mrs. Cobden.

GREGORY.—To make a good cosmetic, take half a pound of soft soap, melt it over a slow fire, with a gill of sweet oil, add two or three tablespoonfuls of fine sand, and stir the mixture together until cool. 2. To remove sunburn, take half an ounce of blanched bitter almonds, half a pint of soft water, make an emulsion by beating the almonds and water together, then strain, and it will be fit for use. 3. For blotches on the face, the best remedy is camphor spirit, or diluted eau de Cologne, applied after washing, twice or thrice a day.

A SUBSCRIBER.—Dissolve copper (gold) in nitric acid (aqua-fortis), and produce a precipitation of it by means of quicklime, employed in such doses that it will be absorbed by the acid, in order that the precipitate may be pure copper, with-

out any mixture; when the liquor has been strained off, wash the precipitate, and spread it on a piece of linen to drain; this precipitate is green, but if a portion be placed on a grinding-stone, and a little powdered quick-lime added, the green colour will be immediately changed into a beautiful blue; the proportion of lime added is from seven to ten parts in a hundred; when the whole matter acquires the consistency of paste, desiccation soon takes place; blue verditer is proper for distemper, and for varnish; but it is not fit for oil-painting, as the oil renders it very dark; if used, it ought to be brightened with a great deal of white.

ANON.—He who cannot see the workings of divine wisdom in the order of the heavens, the change of the seasons, the flowing of the tides, the operation of the wind, and other elements, the structure of the human body, the circulation of the blood through a variety of vessels wonderfully arranged and conducted, the instincts of beasts, their temper and disposition, the growth of plants, and their many effects for meat and medicine,—he who cannot see all these things as the evident contrivances of divine wisdom, is blind, and not worthy to be called a man of sound mind.

E. B. tall, fair, and of gentlemanly appearance. Respondent must be a widow about thirty-five.

NOMA, thirty, tall, fair hair, dark eyes, and a good figure. Respondent must be tall, and in a good business.

EDNA, twenty-four, a widow with one child, in good circumstances, and has a comfortable home.

LIVELY ANNE, eighteen, medium height, blue eyes, brown hair, good tempered, a milliner and dressmaker.

N. A. S., eighteen, about the medium height, of a lively disposition, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must not be too fair.

LEENA A., of Datchet, medium height, fair, and will have a little money when an age. Respondents must be tall and dark.

LOUISE E., seventeen, 5 ft. 6 in., dark, a good singer, and will have a little money when an age. Respondent must be tall, dark, fond of home, and about twenty.

L. A. AVON, sixteen, gray eyes, brown hair, good figure, and pretty, but has no money. Respondent must be dark, tall, fair, and fond of home, a tradesman preferred, not more than twenty-one.

L. H. J., twenty-nine, a railway porter, respectfully connected, 5 ft. 7 in., has saved a little money. Respondent must be between sixteen and twenty-four, good looking, dark hair, and be thoroughly domesticated.

HENRY and JOHN. "Henry," twenty-one, 5 ft. 4 in., dark hair and eyes, and good looking; income, 200*l.*, and fond of music. "John," seventeen, 5 ft. 3 in., fair, blue eyes, moderate income, and good looking. Respondents must be dark, good looking, and not more than twenty.

S. A. and E. C. C. "S. A.," seventeen, 5 ft. 8 in., fair hair, brown eyes, good looking, and fond of home, a soldier preferred. "E. C. C.," sixteen, 5 ft. 2 in., brown hair, and eyes, good teeth. Respondent must be respectable, about eighteen or nineteen, a policeman preferred.

MAGGIE, ALICE, NELLIE. "Maggie," twenty-two, 5 ft. 1 in., Auburn hair, light blue eyes, and cheerful temper. "Alice," twenty, 4 ft. 11 in., fair complexion, hazel eyes, and of a loving disposition. "Nellie," eighteen, 4 ft. 11 in., dark brown hair, gray eyes, and of a loving temper. Respondents must be tall, dark, handsome, and have a moderate income.

VIOLET and SNOWDROP. "Violet," twenty-one, above the medium height, dark hair and eyes, thoroughly domesticated, and has a small income. Respondent must be tall, gentlemanly, and of steady habits, no objection to a widower. "Snowdrop," twenty-three, medium height, fair hair and eyes, thoroughly domesticated, and affectionate. Respondent must be steady, respectable, and fond of home.

A. C. HANNAH H., EMILY K., and EMMA C. "A. C.," tall, fair, and good looking, will have a small fortune when of age. Respondent must be tall, fair, and about twenty. "Hannah H.," medium height, brown hair, dark blue eyes, and good tempered. Respondent must be tall and dark. "Emily K.," eighteen, tall, blue eyes, and rosy cheeks. "Emma C.," nineteen, 5 ft., and a handsome blonde.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

FARD C. is responded to by—"G. L.," eighteen, 5 ft. 4 in., good looking, of an amiable disposition, thoroughly domesticated, and willing to make a good wife.

LEZIE N. by—"A. Young Farmer."

EMILY H. by—"C. W.," tall, rather dark, and not bad looking.

LOVE P. by—"J. J.," twenty-four, 5 ft. 6 in., and dark hair and eyes.

ANNE by—"E. G. Trefusis," highly respectable, and affectionate.

MRS. F. by—"R. A. Leicester," thirty, steady, business habits, and has 200*l.*;—"C. Seymour," thirty-eight, tall, dark curly hair, amiable, good looking, and an income of 500*l.*; and—"Alpha," twenty-eight, a widower, a carpenter by trade, and of sober habits.

ISAAC by—"Clericus," twenty-one, medium height, fair, and good looking.

DEILAN T. by—"E. Mortimer," tall, and gentlemanly—"J. P.," twenty-six, 5 ft. 10 in., dark complexion, tolerably good means, and business prospects; and—"T. B. T.," twenty-one, 5 ft. 7 in., brown hair, and a manufacturer.

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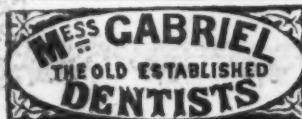
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